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# PoJo's Video Game Review

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## Editor's Letter

# The Dream is Over

Well, it looks like the Sega Dreamcast is the first casualty of the next-gen console war of 2001 — sort of. The company has stopped producing new Dreamcast units but has vowed to continue publishing new DC games for at least another year.

While we were as disappointed as anybody by the news, we definitely believe Sega made the right move. In fact, the company should have gotten out of the hardware business after the demise of the Saturn.

**"Get over it, Sega bashers — the hedgehog ain't going anywhere for a while."**

Without such drastic measures, Sega could have suffered the same fate as another industry pioneer, Atari. In the late '70s, Atari, with its successful VCS gaming console, had the gaming world by the tail. By the mid-'80s, they couldn't give away their "video-game consoles," which were really underpowered Atari computers minus the keyboard.

Atari eventually filed for bankrupcy and sold most of its assets, including the rights to arcade classics Asteroids, Centipede and Missile Command, to Hasbro Interactive.

By getting out of the hardware business altogether and focusing on its greatest strength — making awesome games — Sega could easily become the number-one software publisher in the world. After all, who wouldn't like to play Sonic the Hedgehog on Game Boy Advance or Virtua Fighter 4 on PlayStation 2?




So, is everybody at *PoJo's Video Game Review* getting rid of their Dreamcasts to make room for Xbox and GameCube? Not hardly. With great games like Phantasy Star Online, Daytona: Online, Crazy Taxi, Soul Calibre, Shenmue and NFL 2K1, the Dreamcast has the best game library of any current system. What's more, there are plenty of great games still on the way, like Shenmue 2, Sonic Adventure 2 and Crazy Taxi 2.

So, get over it, Sega bashers — the hedgehog ain't going anywhere for a while.

— The editors

*Got a question or comment? Cheesed off because we left your favorite game out of the buyer's guide? Drop us a line at gmollohan@hsmedia.com, so we can respond in a future issue.*

# Table of Contents

## Features


**10 Play Ball!**
With PlayStation 2 hitting the field this year, choosing a hardball sim is going to be harder than ever, so check out our exclusive scouting report.

**16 Shake Your Groove Thang**
Get the party started with these hot rhythm and music games.

**22 PoJo's Picks**
Don't even think about spending your hard-earned money until you see our list of can't-miss, call-in-sick-for-work, tell-your-friends-and-family-you're-going-to-be-away-for-a-while blockbusters.

**78 The Box That Rocks**
Microsoft storms the console gaming arena with Xbox. But can Bill's box topple the mighty PlayStation 2?

**84 Game Boy Advances**
Nintendo's next-generation Game Boy invades Japan.


## Departments


**1 Editor's Letter**
**4 In Control**
**6 Pay 2 Play**
**8 This Just In**
**90 Coming Soon**
**100 Chalk Talk**



Sega's Phantasy Star Online for Dreamcast

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Distributed by Warner Publisher Services
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# In Control




## MadCatz Panther DC

Love corridor shooters like Quake III and Half-Life but hate the standard Dreamcast controller? Then check out the MadCatz Panther DC — the BFG (big f'n gun) of controllers. This bad boy comes equipped with both an analog joystick and a Centipede-style trackball, which lets you circle strafe with the best of 'em. It's also got 16 (count 'em) action buttons, a memory card slot and rubber hand grips. Best of all, many top Dreamcast games automatically support the Panther, so you don't have to spend a half hour programming the thing. Also available in a PlayStation 2 model, the Panther PX.
By Madcatz

**Suggested price: $39.99**




## Interact Accessories' Mobile Monitor

Transform that svelte, little PlayStation One of yours into a portable arcade with Interact's Mobile Monitor. This backlit, color LCD monitor comes with a two-pronged car adaptor that powers both the PS One and the monitor. Plus it's got stereo speakers, a headphone jack and picture controls, and the device folds on top of the PS One when not in use.
By Interact Accessories

**Suggested price: $149.99**

## Eruptor's PortaPam

Wanna hold everybody's favorite former BayWatch babe and Playboy Playmate in the palm of your hand? Now you can with PortaPam, a downloadable virtual "pet" that "lives" in your Palm Pilot or Handspring Visor. You must make sure Mini-Pam gets to the gym, makes it to auditions and stays out of the tabloids. You also get to feed her a diet of pizza and smoothies, but watch out — feed her too much, and she'll pork out!

Available for download at www.eruptor.com

**Suggested price: The game is free for 48 hours but costs $4.99 to continue playing.**

## Future Console Design's DC-X




Play imported games on your Sega Dreamcast — without a "mod chip" — with Future Console Design's DC-X. Just pop in this CD, turn on your Dreamcast, and wait until the DC-X logo appears. Then remove the DC-X disc, insert the imported game you want to play, and you're good to go. DC-X even works with many PAL(European and Australian) games. One caveat: This product is not licensed by Sega.

By Future Console Design

**Suggested price: $19.95**

# Alienfront Online

## Arcade and home gamers battle for control of the Earth

*First, Sega allowed Dreamcast Quake III players to square-off against their PC counterparts in online deathmatches. Soon, arcade and home gamers will battle for the first time ever with the arrival of the company's Alienfront Online.*

All hype aside, Alienfront Online is a game that only Sega could deliver; from Daytona USA to Star Wars Racer Arcade, the company pretty much pioneered networked, multi-player arcade games. With the fall 2000 launch of SegaNet, the company made online gaming a reality for console gamers.

Alienfront Online combines the best of both worlds by allowing arcade and Dreamcast players to face-off in intense four-on-four network play.

Sci-fi fans should find the game's storyline familiar. Aliens have invaded Earth, intent on eradicating all human life. Rather than become cosmic refugees, Earth's armies have united to send the alien scum packing.

It's up to you decide which side you'll join. Will it be the Earthlings, armed with M1A1 Abrams, Merkava and M-109 tanks or the Triclops, with their two- and four-leg walkers and hovercrafts?

Aside from its colorful graphics, the game boasts a number of other exciting features. Remember that little microphone that came packed with Seaman? Now Dreamcast players can use it to talk trash — or to strategize with teammates — thanks to Alienfront's real-time in-game voice chat system.

Players can create their own "handles" they can use in the arcade and the home as their own Web identities. What's more, they can play the arcade version to unlock special secrets in the home version. Players can also chat online with other gamers, form teams and play in online tournaments.

The invasion begins in May. ■

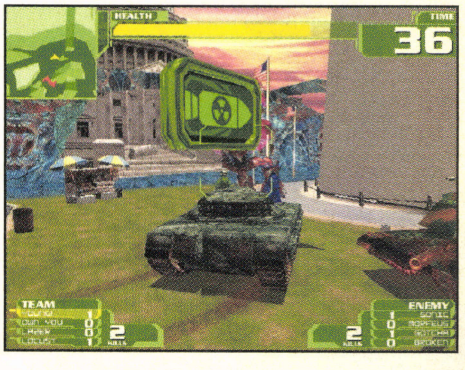



Earth power-ups include flame thrower and nuclear missiles, while the aliens can use gravity balls and meteor showers.









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# Sega Shocker

## The "House of the Hedgehog" dumps Dreamcast in favor of a multi-platform strategy

*On January 31, Sega announced that it is getting out of the video-game hardware business to focus on what it says has been its greatest strength during its 40-year history: making great games.*
*The company, after years of staggering losses, says it plans to take a three-pronged approach to return to profitability:*




- Becoming a "platform-agnostic" third-party video-game publisher for all video-game consoles in addition to handheld devices like Palm Pilots and cellular phones
- Exploiting its current advantage in the network gaming arena
- And becoming an architecture provider of the Dreamcast chip-set to a range of devices, including the Pace Micro Technology set-top box

To get rid of existing Dreamcast inventory, the company slashed the system's price to $99.95. (In comparison, Sony's PlayStation 2, another 128-bit video-game console, costs about $300 — if you can find one.)

### The Bottom Line

While the company has halted Dreamcast production, it hasn't abandoned the console altogether; it still plans to ship more than 30 Dreamcast games in North America this year,






**Among the first Sega titles to appear on competing systems will be Sonic the Hedgehog Advance (for Nintendo's Game Boy Advance) and Virtua Fighter 4 (for Sony's PlayStation 2)**

including high-profile sequels like Sonic Adventure 2, Crazy Taxi 2 and Shenmue 2. The system's fate beyond this year, however, is more dubious.

The company plans to release five PlayStation 2 titles this year, including Virtua Fighter 4, Space Channel 5, Sakura Wars and two sports titles. It also plans to release three new games for Nintendo's upcoming Game Boy Advance — Sonic the Hedgehog Advance, Chu Chu Rocket! and Puyo Puyo.

### What About SegaNet?

SegaNet, the company's high-speed console and PC gaming network, most likely will grow to include other video-game consoles and Internet devices. The company also plans to use the network, which already has more than 200,000 user sign-ups, to deliver other forms of entertainment, including music and movies.

### Sega Bashers, Get Over It!

While the company's decision to abandon the hardware business to focus on software publishing undoubtedly angered many Dreamcast owners, drastic measures were clearly required. Without them, Sega may have disappeared altogether, like industry pioneer Atari.

Instead, the company is now poised to become one of the leading software publishers in the entire world. "We have an incredible line-up, key opportunities with other non-gaming devices and a huge combined installed base worldwide for next-generation platforms," says Peter Moore, president and COO of Sega of America. "With this in place, Sega is well positioned to become the world's dominant interactive software publisher and the leading network entertainment company." ■

# Sega Milestones

**1951** — David Rosen founds Rosen Enterprises

**1965** — Rosen Enterprises merges with a jukebox manufacturing company — "Service Games" — and changes the name to a contraction, Sega.

**1970** — Sega is bought by Gulf & Western

**1985-1987** — Sega releases a string or arcade hits, including Hang On (1985), OutRun (1986), After Burner (1987) and Shinobi (1987).

**1989** — Sega introduces the Sega Genesis, a 16-bit video-game console.

**1991** — Sonic the Hedgehog, one of the most recognizable video-game characters and Sega icon, is born.

**1993** — Virtua Fighter hits arcades.

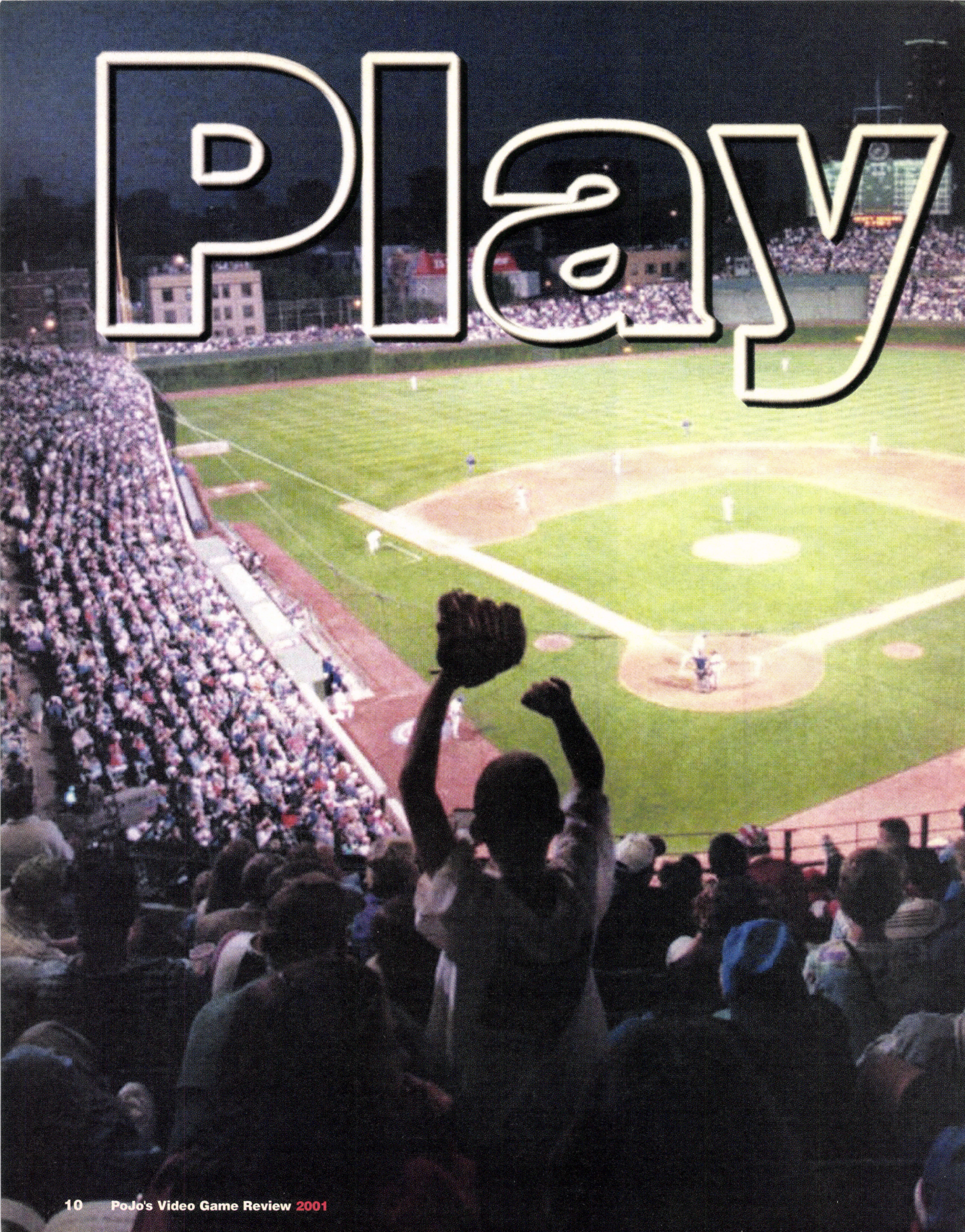
**1995** — Sega introduces the 32-bit Sega Saturn home console and the Sega Nomad, a portable Genesis. That same year, the company introduces Sega Netlink, offering network gameplay.

**1996** — Sega teams up with Dreamworks SKG to launch their own chain of arcade/entertainment centers called Sega Gameworks

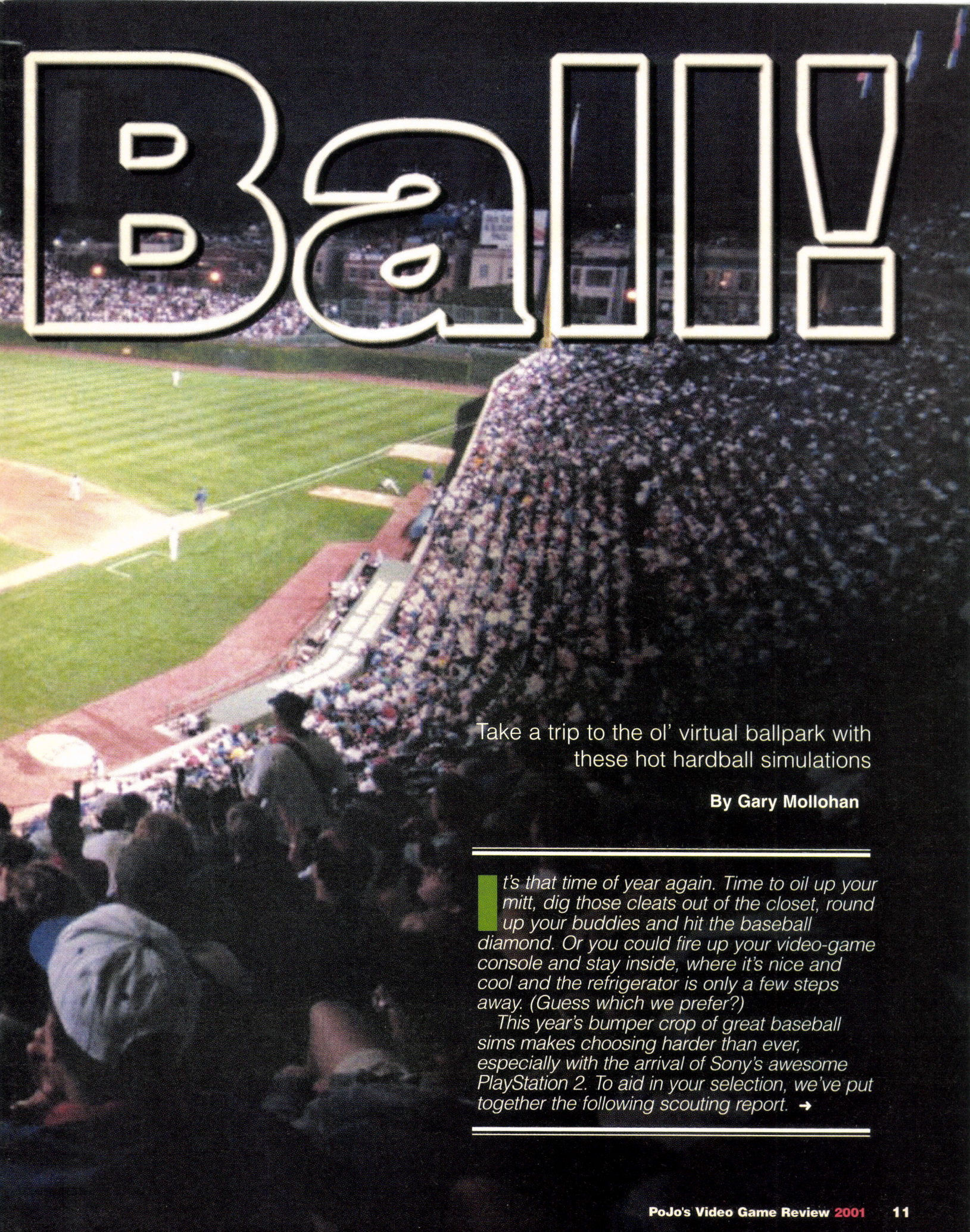
**1999** — Sega launches Dreamcast

**2000** — SegaNet, the world's first online console gaming network and ISP, launches.

**2001** — Sega halts Dreamcast production to become a "platform agnostic" third-party video-game publisher.


Play

# Ball!



Take a trip to the ol' virtual ballpark with these hot hardball simulations

**By Gary Mollohan**

*It's that time of year again. Time to oil up your mitt, dig those cleats out of the closet, round up your buddies and hit the baseball diamond. Or you could fire up your video-game console and stay inside, where it's nice and cool and the refrigerator is only a few steps away. (Guess which we prefer?)*

*This year's bumper crop of great baseball sims makes choosing harder than ever, especially with the arrival of Sony's awesome PlayStation 2. To aid in your selection, we've put together the following scouting report.* ➜

# Play Ball!

## Sega Sports World Series Baseball 2K2

**Publisher:** Sega Sports
**System(s):** Dreamcast
**Release:** Spring



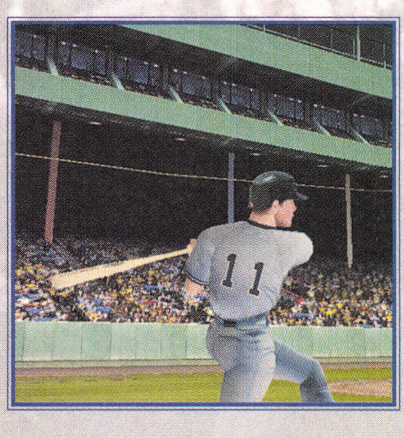
**Last Season:** World Series Baseball 2K1 was quite possibly the worst thing to happen to baseball since night games at Wrigley Field. The game's flaws were almost too numerous to list here: no fielder control, near-impossible batting, skimpy play modes, limited stat tracking — the list goes on. Not even the game's stellar graphics could make the save.

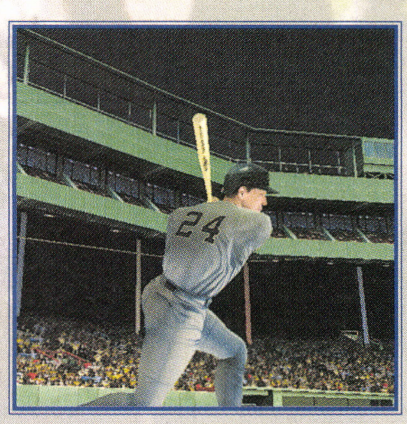
**Key Features:**

- Network compatible, allowing online play, tournaments, chat, etc.
- New fielder controls
- Six play modes: Exhibition, Season, Playoffs, Franchise, Home Run Derby and Network
- Fantasy drafts
- Create-a-player



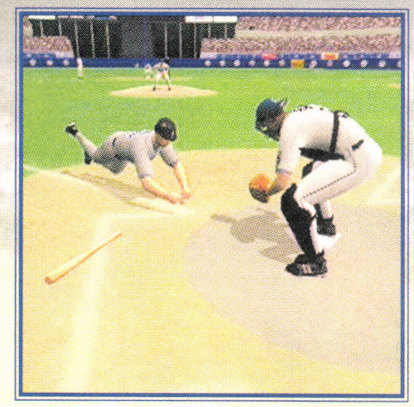
**Scouting Report:** All those consumer complaints must have hit Sega upside the head like a AA battery tossed by a Yankee fan because the company has really been working hard in the off-season. WSB2K2's numerous improvements, especially the new fielder controls and online support, make the game a contender, but will fans burnt by last year's offering give it a fair shake?







***World Series Baseball 2K2 is expected to look much like last year's version, seen here.***



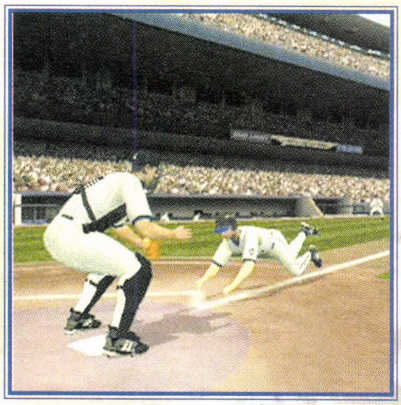
## All-Star Baseball 2002

**Publisher:** Acclaim Sports
**System(s):** PlayStation 2
**Release:** March

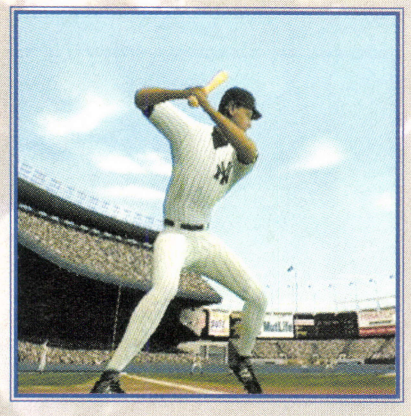
**Last Season:** All-Star Baseball 2001 was by far the best Nintendo 64 hardball game. In fact, many gamers regarded it as the best baseball game available for any system, including PlayStation and Dreamcast. Sharp graphics and deep gameplay, which included innovative 3-D batting and pitch-guessing features, made this one an instant Hall of Famer.

**Key Features:**

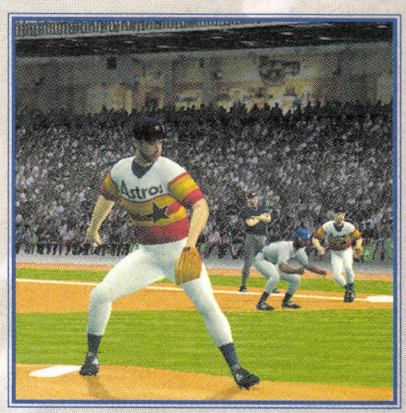
- Improved graphics and sound
- Same great gameplay
- A "Cooperstown" team featuring 25 Hall of Famers like Reggie Jackson, Nolan Ryan and Mike Schmidt
- In-game awards, including Cy Young, Rookie of the Year and Gold Glove
- Seven play modes: Season, Exhibition, Series, Homerun Derby, Batting Practice, All-Star and General Manager.



**Scouting Report:** The only thing that has us worried is the change in platforms. Typically, developers need a year or two of tinkering to really get the most out of a new system. Longtime fans of the series may want to take a rent-and-see approach. ➜





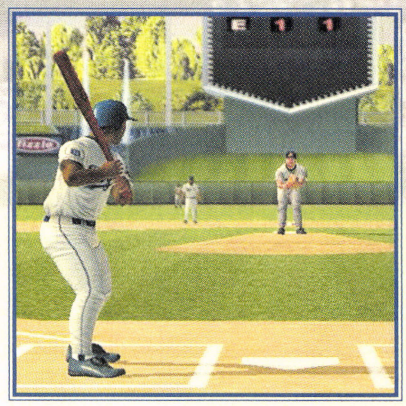



***All-Star Baseball 2002 retains the innovative 3-D batting and pitch-guessing features that have made the series a fan favorite.***

# Play Ball!

## Triple Play Baseball

**Publisher:** EA Sports
**System(s):** PlayStation, PlayStation 2, PC
**Release:** Spring



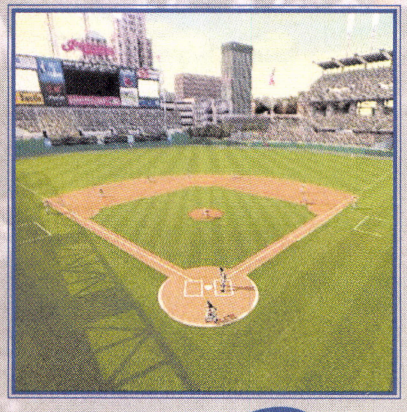
**Last Season:** The knock against Triple Play 2001 was that it sometimes sacrificed realism in favor of entertainment value. For instance, hard-hit balls were accompanied by missile-like vapor trails and sound effects. You could also unlock cheat codes that gave players jumbo-size heads, bats, etc. Such hokum aside, the game looked and played great.

**Key Features:**

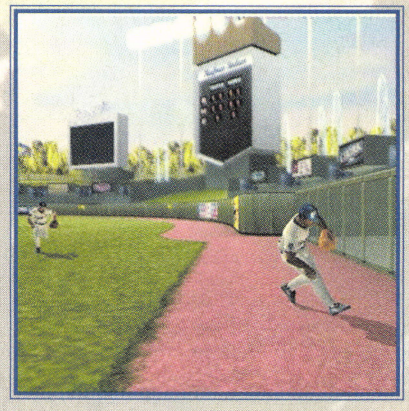
- Depth-of-field visual effects. (Notice how far-away players look slightly blurry?)
- Real-time lighting in three distinct atmospheres: day, dusk and night games
- All-new pitcher/batter interface with a visible strike zone, pitching cursor and batting cursor
- Improved player artificial intelligence
- Semi-automatic fielder control, including one-button throws to the best base



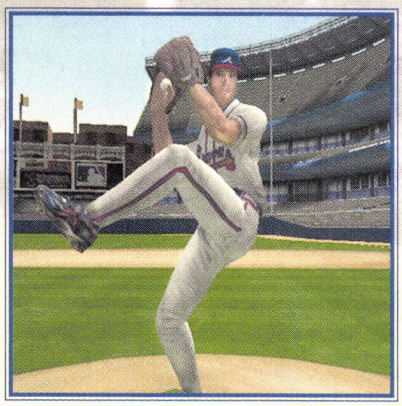
**Scouting Report:** Graphically, the game looks like a mixed bag. Player textures look great — just look at the wrinkles in those uniforms — but the crowd looks surprisingly flat and blurry. Still, EA Sports has already produced two of the best PlayStation 2 games, Madden 2001 and SSX (snowboarding). Triple Play Baseball looks like it will continue that proud tradition.

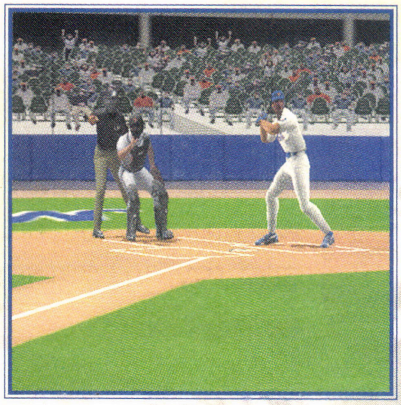






***Triple Play Baseball has impressive depth-of-field effects. (Notice how far-away players look slightly blurry?)***





## High Heat Baseball

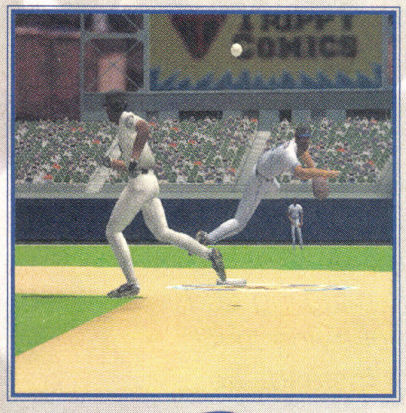
**Publisher:** 3DO
**System(s):** PlayStation, PS2, PC
**Release:** Spring

**Last Season:** Known as Sammy Sosa High Heat Baseball 2001, last year's PlayStation version was slammed for its poor graphics and occasionally suspect artificial intelligence. The stellar PC version, however, has been the gold standard of baseball sims for years.

**Key Features:**

- The most realistic pitcher/batter duels anywhere
- Franchise features that made the PC version famous
- On-field coaches and managers who wave runners home or visit the mound
- A fastplay mode that allows you to play a game in about 10 minutes (perfect for simulating 162-game seasons)
- Loads of signature animations and real player faces

**Scouting Report:** Thankfully, the new PlayStation 2 version seems to have more in common with the stellar PC version than its PS One cousin. If you're a real stat freak, this is the game for you. ■







***High Heat Baseball is said to have the most realistic pitcher/batter duels found in a video game.***



# Shake Your Groove Thang

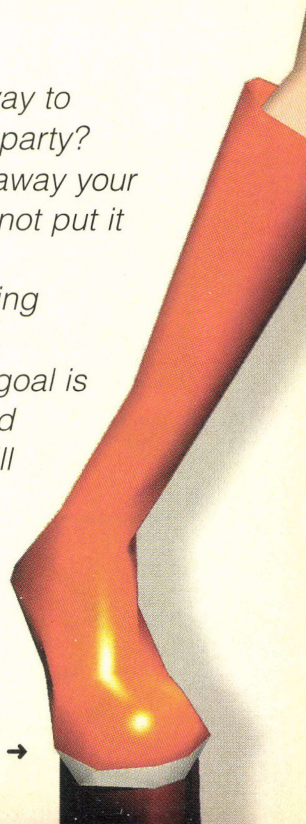
Get the party started with these hot music and rhythm games

By Gary Mollohan

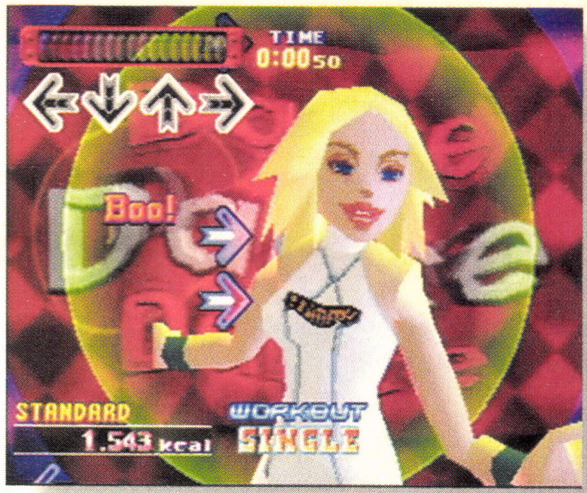


*Looking for a great way to jumpstart your next party? Instead of packing away your video-game console, why not put it front and center?*

*Now, we're not suggesting an impromptu Tekken Tag Tournament (after all, the goal is to get people mingling and having fun, not trying to kill one another). Instead, we suggest introducing your friends to today's hottest video-game genre, music and rhythm games.*






TIME
0:00 50
Boo!
STANDARD
1.543 kcal
WORKOUT
SINGLE


B
RANK
SCORE
0002 6000
SCORE
0002 6000
B
RANK
32
32
NORMAL




Shoot aliens with the A Button Beam.
View Rating

# Shake Your Groove Thang




The arcade version of Dance Dance Revolution has been drawing crowds for over a year.

# Dance Dance Revolution

While it wasn't the first game in the category, Konami's Dance Dance Revolution — or "DDR," as those in the know call it — turned the genre into the full-blown craze it is today, first in the arcades and now on PlayStation.

Anyone who's set foot in an arcade recently has probably seen DDR. The machines, which cost a cool $15,000 a piece, are outfitted with more flashing lights and neon than your average riverboat casino.

The game is so popular in its native Japan there are entire arcades filled with nothing but DDR machines! The game is becoming equally popular in the States, thanks in part to arcade-sponsored dance contests.

Now a home version of the game — complete with its own dance pad accessory — is available. (The game can also be purchased by itself, but if your missing the special controller, your missing most of the fun).

The home version is played the same as its arcade counterpart — by stepping on up, down, left and right arrows in time with the music. Players must "dance" correctly to about 70 percent of the moves to win, which ain't easy, given the fact that a minute-long routine has about 300 steps.

The PlayStation version of DDR features 27 CD-quality songs in styles ranging from pop, disco, hip-hop, techno and more. The game includes a single-player mode for anyone looking to brush up on his or her moves, but it's the two-player competive and cooperative modes that will really get the joint jumpin'.



Samba de Amigo's maraca controllers



# Samba de Amigo





Gamers with two left feet might want to try Sega's Samba de Amigo for Sega Dreamcast. Like Dance Dance Revolution, Samba de Amigo utilizes its own unique controllers, in this case, a pair of bright red maracas. As the music plays, players are prompted to shake their maracas to the beat at one of three different heights. The more shakes a player performs in perfect rhythm, the higher the points they receive. What's more, certain parts of the songs have "posing" periods, in which players stop shaking their controllers and make like Madonna by striking their best poses.The game contains five different play modes, five levels of difficulty and avariety of mini games. Best of all, it's also got a number of licensed tunes, including Living La Vida Loca and LaBamba, guaranteed to have your party guests shakin' like cafeteria jello. ➜

# Shake Your Groove Thang











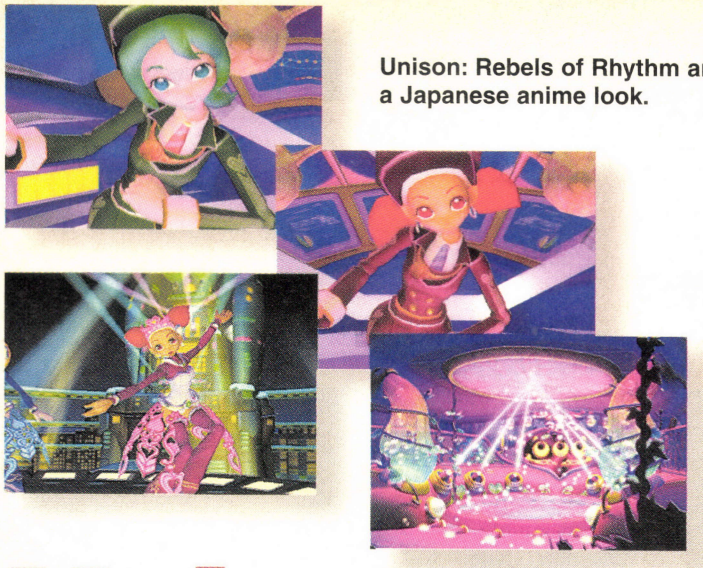

# Space Channel 5

Gamers without the dough to invest in pricy controllers don't have to be left out of the fun, thanks to Sega's Space Channel 5.

The game — best described as *Barbarella* meets *Soul Train* — stars Ulala, a 25th century space goddess who must fend off invading aliens with the only weapon at her disposal, her booty! By mimicking the moves of the funky aliens, Ulala dances them to death and releases hypnotized humans from their control. Not only must gamers mimic the aliens' dance moves, they've got to keep the beat — so pauses, quick repeats and single moves must be timed perfectly.

In addition to an upbeat soundtrack and loads of flashy, motion-captured dance moves, the game is chock-full of retro-futuristic eye candy, including psychedelic backgrounds and sixties-style clothing.

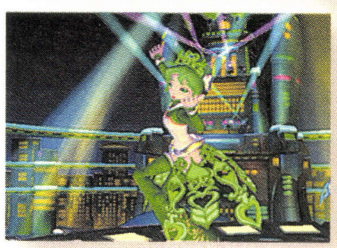
While the game lacks the wealth of play modes found in DDR and Samba de Amigo, it does have several hidden levels and mini-quests for added replay value.



Unison: Rebels of Rhythm an Dance has a Japanese anime look.

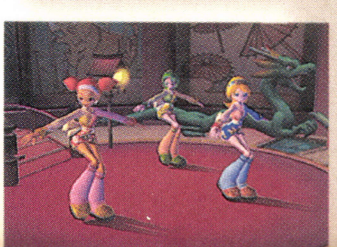
# Unison: Rebels of Rhythm and Dance

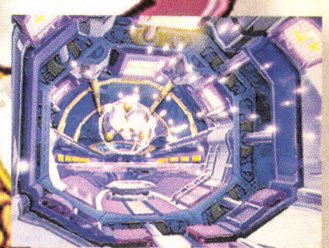














Tecmo delivers a similar gameplay experience to PlayStation 2 owners with Unison: Rebels of Rhythm and Dance. The game sheds Space Channel 5's psychedelia in favor of a Japanese anime look and feel.

The game's plot reads like Orwell meets *Footloose*: 200 years in the future, a ruthless dictator has placed a strict prohibition on dancing. In order to liberate the citizens, players must remind them of the "mystical power of dance and rhythm."

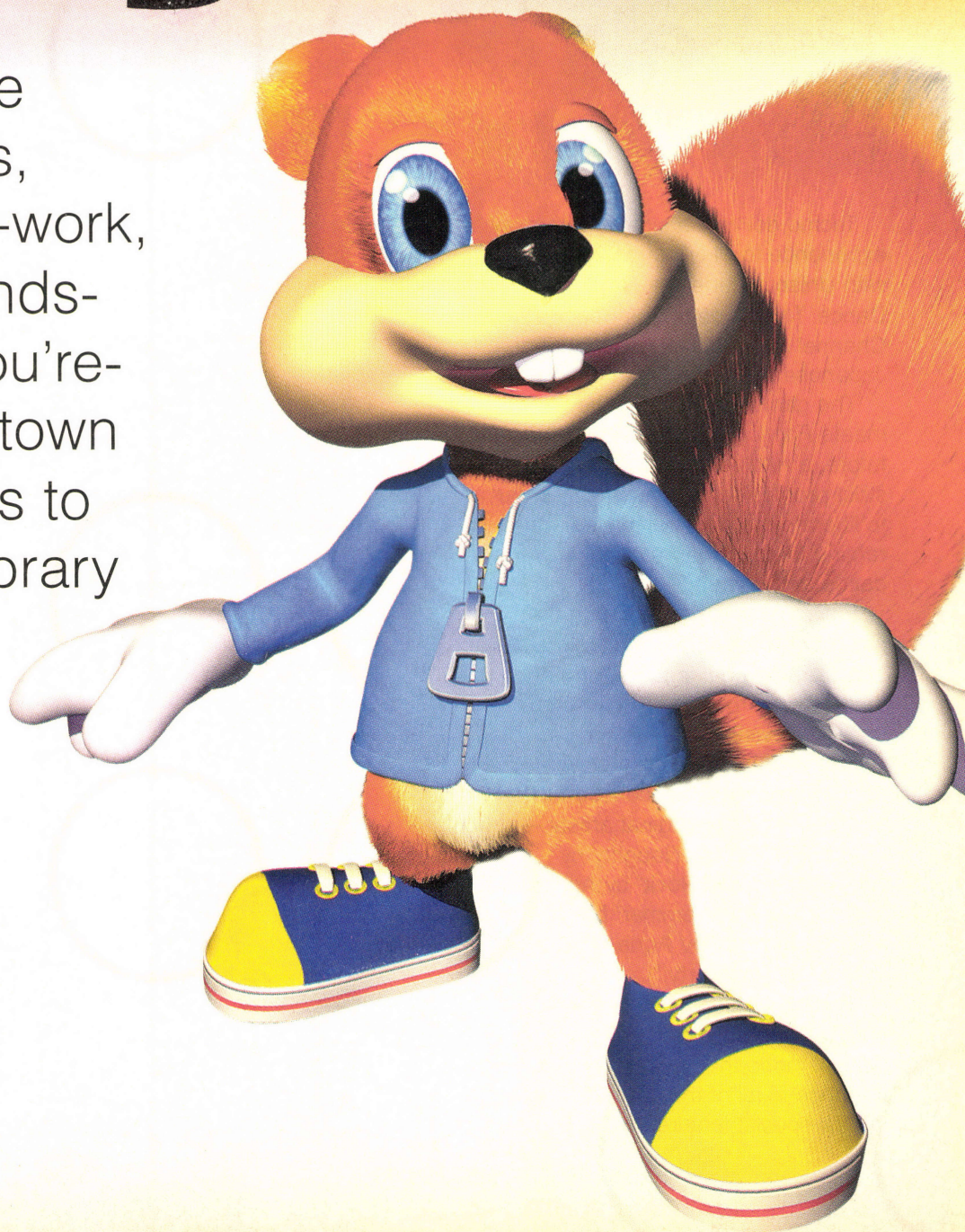
Players begin by mastering the basics with the help of dance teacher. The ultimate goal is to perform an entire dance routine, mistake-free, on live television.

Like Samba de Amigo, Unison is packed with loads of licensed tunes — performed by the original artists — including "OPP" by Naughty by Nature, "Stop the Rock" by Apollo Forty, "Country Grammar" by Nelly and "Barbie Girl" by Aqua ("Come on, Barbie, let's go party!")

The game also has a number of different play modes, including a special mode that allows three players to dance to all of the game's songs to unlock special features. ■

# Buyer's

Add these can't-miss, call-in-sick-for-work, tell-your-friends-and-family-you're-going-out-of-town blockbusters to your game library today



# Guide




## PlayStation 2
Pages 24-39

## PlayStation
Pages 40-49

## Dreamcast
Pages 50-63

## Nintendo 64
Pages 64-69

## Game Boy Color
Pages 70-77

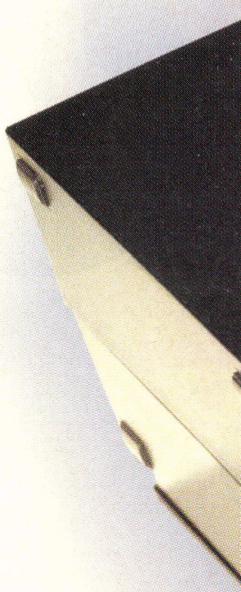
# Sony PlaySt

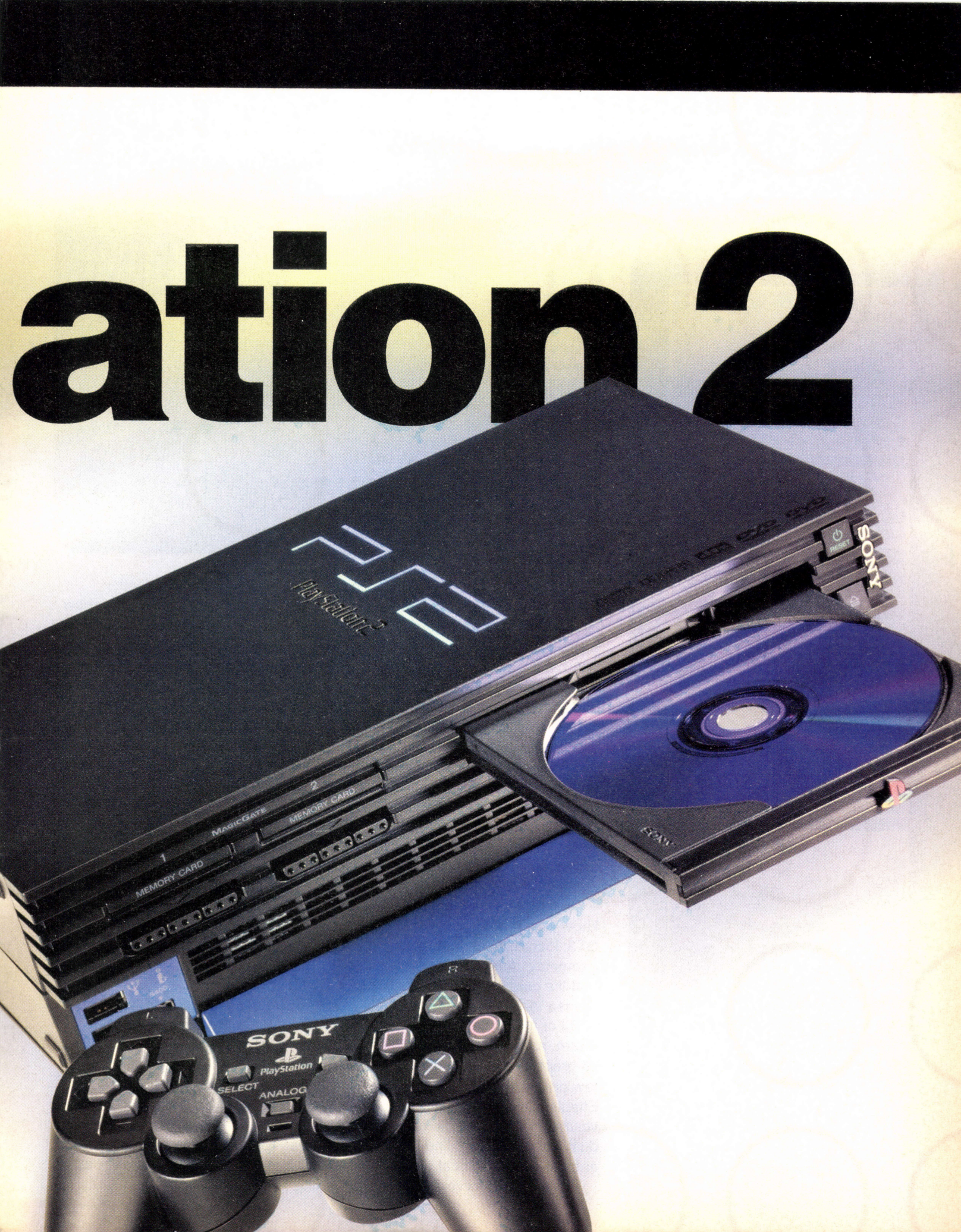
UNLESS YOU'RE A TOYS R US MANAGER OR AN EBAY user with very deep pockets, you probably weren't able to get your hands on a PlayStation 2 this holiday season. When Sony delivered a mere 500,000 units to stores on October 26 —instead of the 2 million it initially promised — the company inadvertently created the biggest holiday sensation since Tickle Me Elmo.

Within days of the system's launch, an unopened PS2 was fetching as much as twice its suggested retail price on Internet auction sites. One Illinois man was even robbed at gunpoint for his!

One fact all the media reports failed to mention, however, was that the PS2 launch was accompanied by the weakest game lineup since the arrival of the N64. Aside from EA Sports' SSX and Madden 2001, there really wasn't anything else worth playing — aside from *The Matrix* on DVD.

Fortunately, a few games that genuinely live up to all the hype — such as Gran Turismo 2 and Onimusha Warlords— are finally starting to arrive, as the following pages reveal.




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SONY
RESET
MEMORY CARD
MEMORY CARD
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PlayStation
SELECT
ANALOG

# Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec

**Publisher:** SCEA
**Players:** 1-6
**Availability:** Now





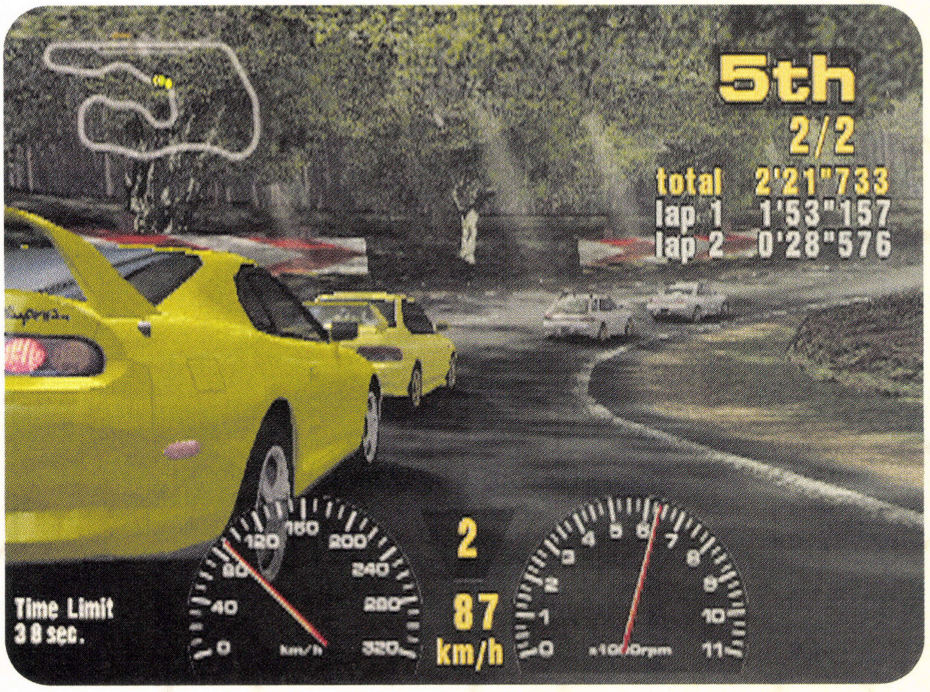










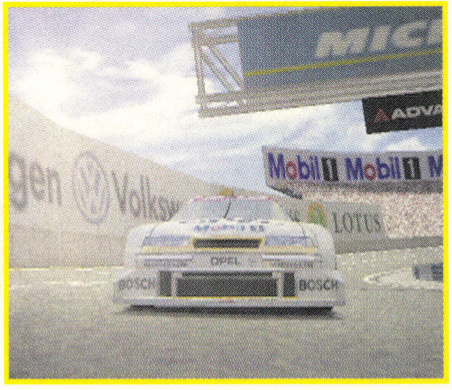




Gran Turismo's journey to the PlayStation 2 has been a long and confusing one, as Sony initially intended Gran Turismo 2000, a beefed-up version of GT2, to be a launch title for its new console. Somewhere along the way, the developers decided to revamp the whole project, and GT3 A-Spec was born. As one of the most hotly anticipated PS2 games in the pipeline, this sequel has the potential to be a true "system-seller," the kind of game that will motivate people to buy a console just for the chance to play.

Fans of the previous two titles know exactly what to expect from GT3: incredibly realistic racing gameplay, a massive collection of real-life cars and those infuriating license tests.

All of these classic aspects return, augmented by amazing 128-bit graphics that truly show off the raw power of the PlayStation 2. Effects like blazing sunbeams, volumetric fog, realistic rain, swirling dust clouds and sizzling heat waves enhance the graphical realism.

Fifteen impressive stages mimic real-world locations perfectly. However, the real stars of the show are the cars, faithfully reproduced with exacting detail. Over 150 American, European and Japanese sports cars can be attained, and over 30 of these are all-new to the series.

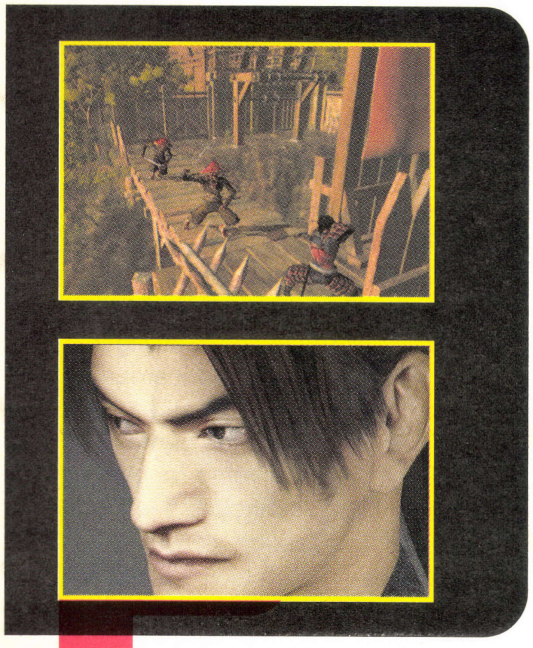


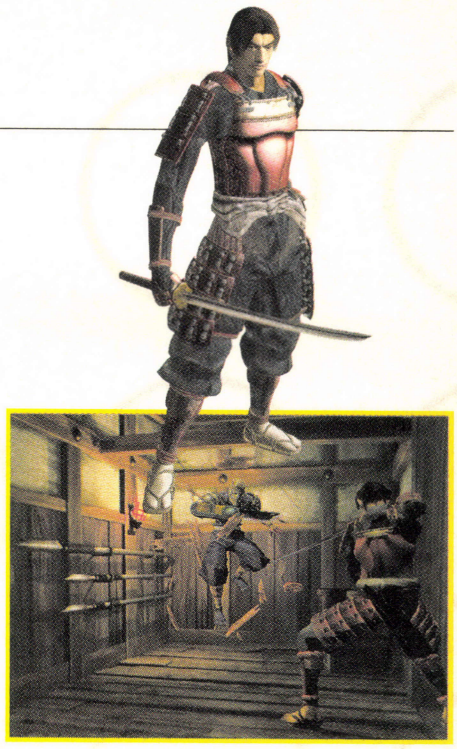

True gearheads can tweak minute details of each vehicle's performance in the Simulation Mode, while racing lightweights looking for a good time will enjoy the less complex Arcade Mode.

GT3 also features a two-player head-to-head mode and support for up to six simultaneous players using the I-link cable. ■

# Onimusha Warlords

**Publisher:** Capcom
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now





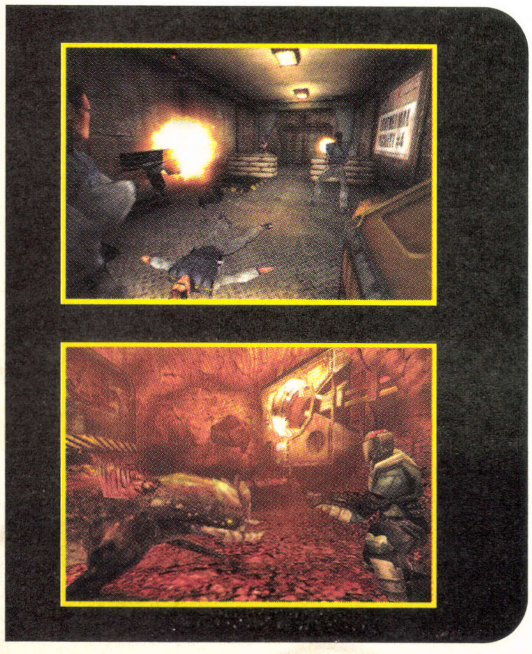
Slice 'n' dice your way through an endless horde of demon warriors in Onimusha, Capcom's first game designed especially for the PlayStation 2. Gameplay is said to be similar to Capcom's hit Resident Evil series. Players assume the role of Samanasuke, a 16th-century samurai out to rescue a kidnapped princess from an evil warlord.

In addition to his trusty sword, Samanasuke is armed with a mystical gauntlet, which can be equipped with elemental gems to unleash screen-filling wind, fire and thunder attacks. The gauntlet can also be used to absorb the souls of fallen enemies, a la Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver. Depending on the color of the soul, it will have a different effect on Samanasuke, such as restoring his health or powering up his magic attacks.

Besides its mind-bending graphics, the game also has a movie-calibre script and musical score performed by a 200-piece orchestra. ■

# Red Faction

**Publisher:** THQ
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** May





The developers of Summoner are back, but instead of delivering another action RPG, they've set their sights on revolutionizing one of the hottest genres in video games today, the first-person shooter.

Red Faction is, like many other corridor shooters, a plot-heavy adventure. Developer Volition weaves a tale of a dystopian future filled with menacing corporations. This time you're up against the dreaded Ultor Corporation, as Parker, an enigmatic and charismatic cog struggling to get out of the machine.

What the developers have done that's completely original (and may prove to be the most important change to the way games of this type are played) is given players the ability to destroy any part of the background with their weapons. And we're not talking about some broken glass and a few bullet holes, either — every wall, surface and room in the game can be realistically destroyed.

You even have an infrared gauge that shows the location of enemies behind obstructions, allowing you to take out your opponents without ever seeing their faces.

Innovation has come to the FPS genre. Red Faction may well prove to be the most ground-breaking corridor shooter since Quake. ■

# Sky Odyssey

○○○○ **Publisher:** Activision
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** Now





Looking for a light-hearted yet challenging flight sim for PS2 that harkens back to the likes of Nintendo's Pilot Wings 64? Well, look no further than Activision's Sky Odyssey.

In the game's Adventure Mode, players must complete 35 diverse missions, which range from navigating dangerous caverns to saving a wayward hot air balloon to landing on an aircraft carrier. All the while, they must retrieve missing pieces of an ancient map, which leads to, well, you'll just have to play the game, won't you?

In addition to Adventure Mode, the game contains Training, Target and Free Flight Modes. There's also an innovative Sky Canvas Mode that lets players become amateur sky writers.

While the game's graphics and environments are surprisingly bland for a PlayStation 2 game — rumor has it the game began life as a PlayStation One title — the game does have extremely realistic flight physics, complete with dangerous air currents and changing weather.

On the down side, the game lacks Pilot Wings' diverse range of aircraft, which also included jet packs and hanggliders.

Still, there's much to like about PlayStation 2's first flight simulator. ■

# ATV Offroad Fury

○○○○ **Publisher:** SCEA
○○○○ **Players:** 1-4
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Ah, the hallmark high-pitched whine, the hard ruts and hip-separating accidents of off-road racing. And athough the mud 'n' knobby tire video-game genre reached the saturation point last year with BMX, Moto, Super and SnoCross games popping up like acne on a KFC employee's face, this game promises a unique ATV experience. As the first game to feature licensed ATVs from Kawasaki, Honda and Yamaha, amazing graphics, over 20 gigantic courses, freestyle and head-to-head racing, our engines are revved. Tweak-freaks can customize tire friction, shocks, steering and braking, too. Not enough authenticity for you? Have a friend throw dirt in your face while you play, Xtreme Boy. ■





# Silpheed: The Lost Planet

○○○○ **Publisher:** Working Designs
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** Now

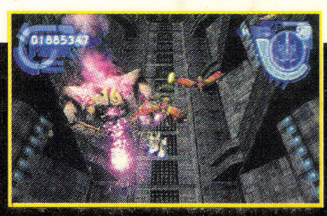


Working Designs brings us yet another old-school Japanese shooter with Silpheed: The Lost Planet. While the gameplay hasn't evolved much since the last game in this series (oldsters will remember it from Sega CD) that doesn't mean you can't have a blast. The sweet, sweet graphics don't hurt, either.

Grab your ship and burn through several levels in a race to take down an encroaching alien menace. Get your trigger finger limbered up because it's going to be one intense ride.

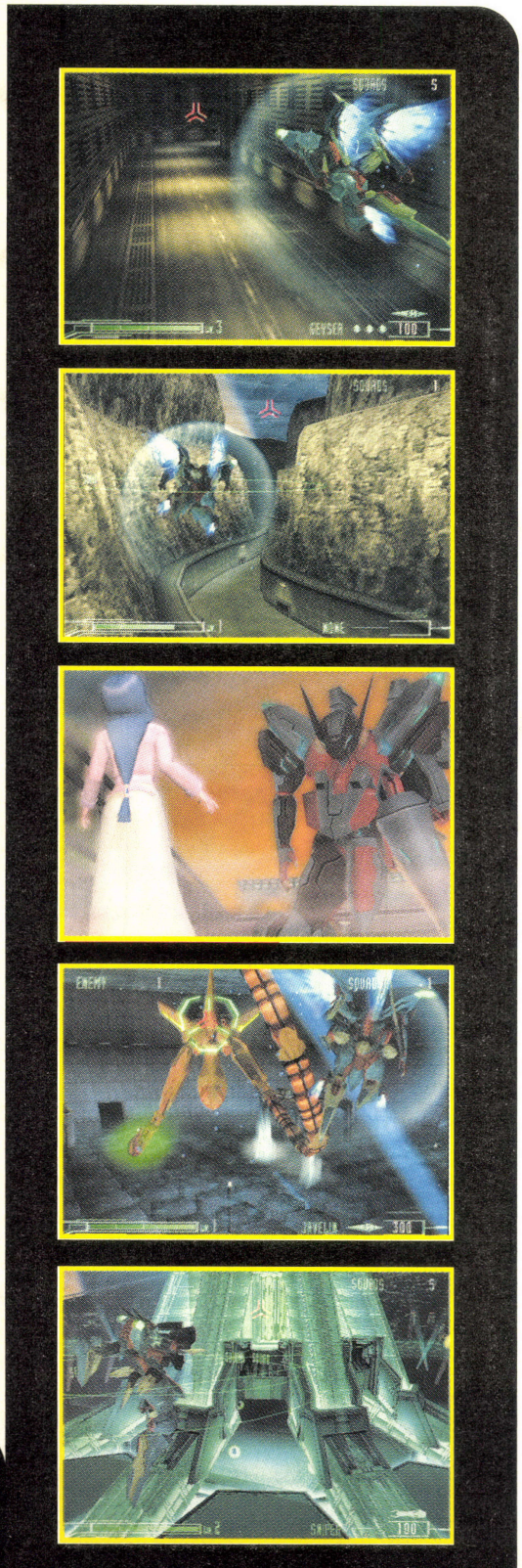
If you still remember why you started playing video games in the fist place — to blow the hell out of stuff — Silpheed: The Lost Planet might be for you. ■





# Zone of the Enders

**Publisher:** Konami
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



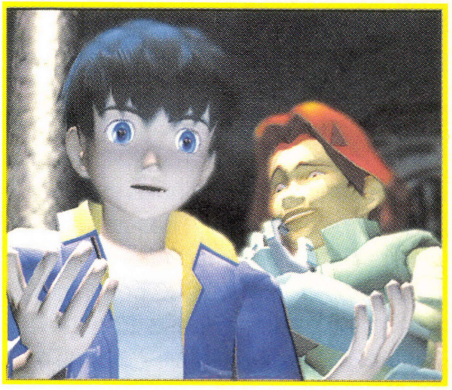



Fans of anime like *Gundam Wing* or *Neon Genesis Evangelion* won't be the only ones impressed by Konami's Zone of the Enders. Sure, the game — designed by and for fans of giant, anime-style robots — fulfills every wish a Gundam geek could hope for. But with amazing graphics and inventive gameplay, it should astound anyone who loves games.

The game's engrossing tale begins with Leo Stenbuck, a young man caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. As he and his companions sneak into a UN installation to loot its junkyard, they accidentally step into the middle of a battle. As Leo sees his friends die, his only hope for survival lies in taking control of the top-secret Orbital Frame Jehuty, and that's where the adventure begins.

As you pilot your rock 'em, sock 'em robot through the space colony, you'll encounter pockets of enemy mechs you must destroy. The game's seamless control and intuitive motion means that you'll find little difficulty in battling your opposition. Expect lots of intrigue as you encounter characters like rival pilot Viola, a flame-headed vixen who's determined to take down Leo.

The game's graphics are absolutely breathtaking. The futuristic colony landscapes are rendered in tons of detail, and the mech designs are perfectly

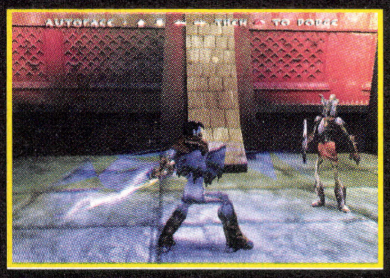


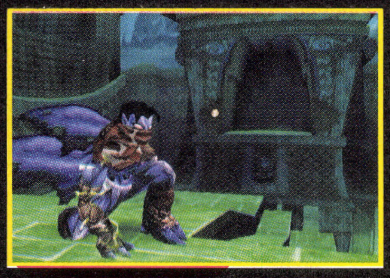
represented in 3D. The particle and lighting effects thrown by the Orbital Frames' weapons are breathtaking. You can destory not only opponents but structures inside the colony, if you're not careful.

This is a true instant classic, executive produced by Hideo Kojima, the creator of the acclaimed Metal Gear Solid series. ■

# Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2

○○○○ **Publisher:** Eidos Interactive
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** May





The end of Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain was abrupt, to say the least. Credible sources on the Web mention unused data on the CD, depicting a game that met its end before its developers intended. Soul Reaver 2 handily remedies this situation.

Soul-sucker Raziel is back, and Kain must be punished for the horrors he's visited on Nosgoth. This time, you'll have many more powers and "reavers" — mystic swords such as the first game's Soul Reaver — at your disposal. You'll travel through time, into the history of the realm, trying to right wrongs and silence the black-hearted Kain before his evil can spread.

Besides an expanded story, improved graphics, and more weapons and spells, you can expect a greater variety of puzzles in this high-profile sequel — in other word's, there's no more dull switch-flipping and box-pushing.



Of course, the moody, decrepit and demonic denizens of Nosgoth return, with more intrigue and malevolence of the first game.

Soul Reaver 2 surpasses its predecessor in every way, offering a richer, fuller game. Adventure fans looking for an atmospheric quest will not be disappointed with this journey into a world of undead. ■

# Knockout Kings

○○○○ **Publisher:** EA Sports
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



All of the EA Sports PlayStation 2 titles have set new standards for graphical excellence, and this boxing simulation continues the trend with stunningly realistic prize fighters. These lifelike renditions of famous boxers like Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Leonard are each composed of over 10,000 polygons!

Gameplay also benefits from the leap to 128-bits; a new feature dubbed "Dynamic Punch Control" allows the player to create unique punch combinations on the fly, allowing ultimate customization of fighting style.

If you're looking for a boxing game with some real substance and strategy, this is the one to buy. ■

# 4x4 Evolution

○○○○ **Publisher:** G.O.D.
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Usually, we see SUV's racing through supermarket parking lots, driven by angry soccer moms. Not so in 4X4 Evolution. In this hot, new racing game, they're where they're meant to be: off the road, in the dirt. This racing game takes these trucks on a journey through back roads and treacherous territory.

Grab your beast and drive as quickly as possible, passing over muddy hill and dale in a free-for-all race to the finish. Shortcuts and obstacles abound.

This is the next evolution of 4x4 racing, courtesy of the PS2. ■



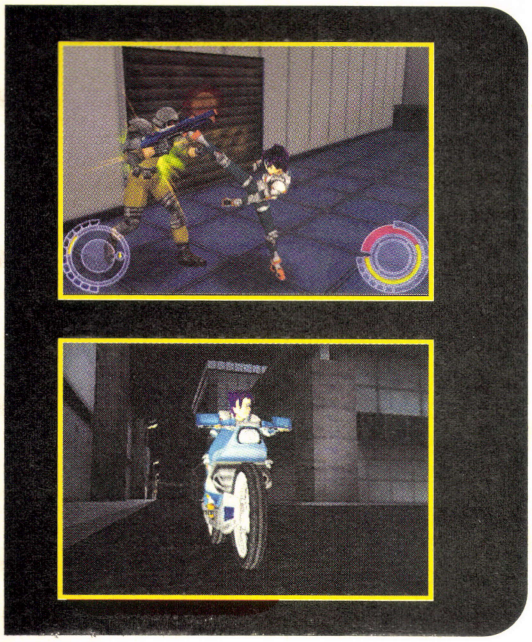






# Oni

**Publisher:** Rockstar Games
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now





Oni is a new 3D action/adventure from the publisher of such PlayStation 2 hits as Smuggler's Run and Midnight Club Street Racing.

The game stars Konoko, a pistol-packing, anime-inspired babe with a mysterious past. As an elite member of the Tech Crimes Task Force, Konoko is tasked with bringing down the evil Syndicate. But, as most sci-fi fans know, things are not always as they seem.

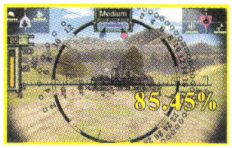
The game plays like a cross between Tomb Raider and Tekken. In addition to an arsenal of futuristic weapons — including pistols, rocket launchers, energy and projectile weapons — Konoko can also kick butt the old-fashion way — with her fists. The game contains an impressive array of fighting moves, including combos, throws, jump flips and ultra-sneaky disarming moves. Konoko even acquires new moves as progresses through the game's 17 sprawling levels.

On the down side, the game has an occasionally maddening level of difficulty, and pulling off the cooler fighting moves is usually a matter of luck instead of skill. Tomb Raider-style auto-aiming also would have been appreciated.

Still, there's much to like about this stylish, genre-bending title. ■

# Ring of Red

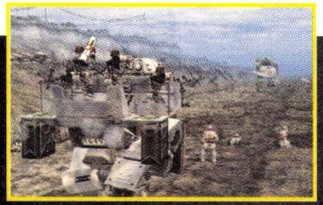
**Publisher:** Konami
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now




Finally, a game that asks the burning question: What would have happened if civil war — fought with giant, gas powered mechs — had broken out in World War II-era Japan?

In Ring of Red, players command squads composed of foot soldiers and eight unique Armored Fighter Walkers. Most of the game takes place on grid-based maps. Encounter the enemy, however, and you'll be yanked into battle, where you have to manually control your units.

The story unfolds over 20 scenarios, filled with political and ideological intrigue. What's more, the game combines historical WWII footage with computer-rendered animation, giving it a novel yet believable look. ■






# Tiger Woods: PGA Golf 2001

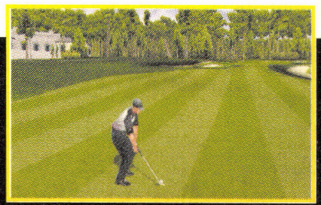
**Publisher:** EA Sports
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Winter

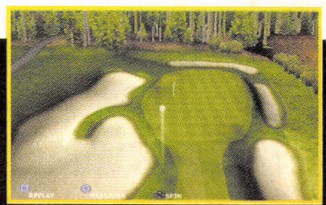


Tiger Woods made golf cool, and EA Sports makes it even cooler with this fully 3D PlayStation 2 golf simulation.

Several real PGA courses (like Pebble Beach and Spyglass) and top golfers (like Tiger Woods and some other guys) have been lavishly recreated in full polygonal splendor, showcasing the immense power of the PS2. The game ditches the outdated button-pressing method of hitting the ball, instead utilizing the analog stick for realistic swinging action.

With several different game modes and pre-made golfing scenarios, Tiger Woods 2001 is the finest golf sim on the market. ■





# Twisted Metal: Black

**Publisher:** SCEA
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** TBD



The game that spawned the entire car combat genre is back with a darker and more twisted vision. Twisted Metal: Black brings back the developer of the series' first two titles. Critics claim that the last two PlayStation Twisted Metal games got away from the series' focus. That complaint is being addressed, as the series is revitalized and reformed by its originators.

As before, you'll pilot your vehicle of choice through dark and mysterious battlefields, vanquishing friends in the name of ultimate glory. According to the developers, the game's more mature tone is inspired by films like *Seven* and *The Silence of the Lambs*.

The game takes full advantage of the PS2's graphical muscle with impressive effects and detail. Its levels are fully interactive, and if

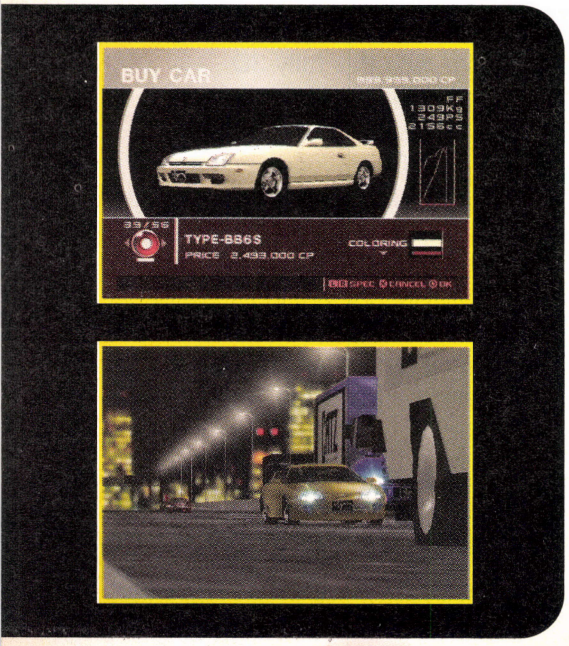


you're not careful the background might make mincemeat of you. One level, for instance, has a giant ferris wheel that can be blown off its foundation and turned into rolling wheel o' destruction, crushing anything and anybody unlucky enough to be in its path.

The world of vehicular combat just got darker, and that black box in front of your television just a mite more menacing. Welcome back to the world of Twisted Metal. ■

# Tokyo Extreme Racer: Zero

**Publisher:** Crave
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** April




If you're not familiar with the Dreamcast Tokyo Extreme Racer (TXR) games, prepare for a racing experience unlike any you've experienced before. The game's dark city highways are overrun by gangs in modified cars, cruising for just one more race. As the new guy in town, you'll have to prowl the city streets looking for opponents.

Each race is completed when an opponent's "SP" drains — these points, not unlike the health meters in a fighting game, are sapped when you outdistance him.

Once you beat some thugs and save up a little cash, you can buy modifications for your car. Whether they're technical or visual is up to you. Anything from fine-tuned engines to ridiculous spoilers are at your disposal.

The game also has a new two-

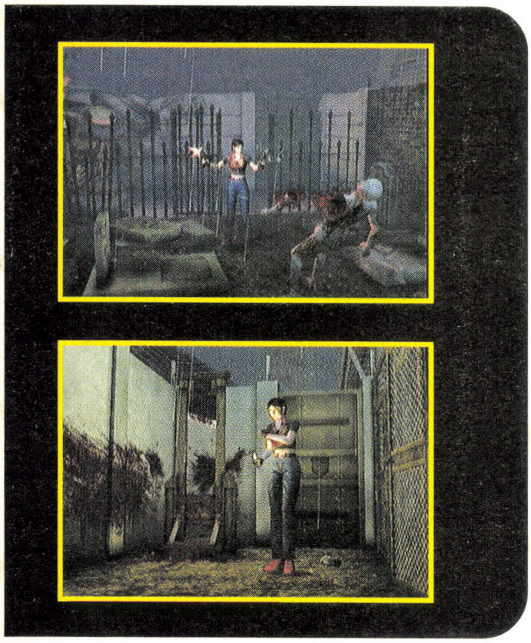



player mode. Take your souped-up rod out against a friend and zoom through miles of authentic Tokyo highways, lit only by the glare of your headlights.

TXR0 is the most atmospheric and engaging racer you're likely to play. Once you've defeated enough gang leaders you can proclaim yourself king of the Tokyo streets. The slick graphics, lengthy roads and huge selection of cars will really get your juices flowing. ■

# Resident Evil CODE: Veronica Complete

○○○○ **Publisher:** Capcom
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** TBD





Capcom's Dreamcast survival horror masterpiece lurches onto the PlayStation 2 in this newly enhanced version. CODE: Veronica follows the exploits of Claire and Chris Redfield, the zombie-blasting siblings who each saw some action in previous RE games. The undead menace has spread beyond Raccoon City, so the heroes travel to Europe and Antarctica to unravel the mysteries of the nefarious Umbrella Corporation.

The beloved Resident Evil gameplay remains largely unchanged, so fans of the series will be capping zombies, pushing statues and eating herbs like pros. However, the graphics have been seriously overhauled since the old PlayStation versions. Gone are the boring 2D backgrounds; Capcom has replaced them with fully 3D polygonal environments. This change yields even creepier scenes, as the camera now pans dramatically like a good horror flick.

Since this is the "complete" version of CODE: Veronica, PS2 gamers will be getting some cool new features. Seven minutes of new CG cinemas help to flesh out the story, spooky villain Albert Wesker gets more screen time and Claire's sidekick, Steve Burnside, gets a new haircut (he no longer looks exactly like Leonardo DiCaprio). ■

# Winback

○○○○ **Publisher:** Koei
○○○○ **Players:** 1-4
○○○○ **Availability:** TBD



Although software publisher Koei is usually known for its yawn-inducing historical war simulations, Winback proves that it can also deliver a thrilling action/adventure.

Winback first appeared on the N64 a few years ago, but this PS2 version has received a graphical facelift, trading in the N64's blurry textures and lackluster characters for 128-bit grandeur.

The plot, however, remains the same: French superspy Jean-Luc Cougar sneaks around blasting baddies and saving the free world. The game plays a lot like Syphon Filter, with a touch of GoldenEye 007 tossed in as a chaser. ■

# MDK2: Armageddon

○○○○ **Publisher:** Interplay
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



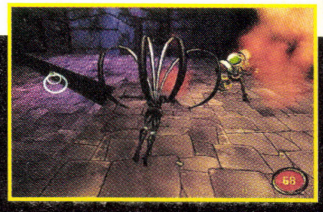
MDK2 garnered critical acclaim on the Dreamcast and PC last year, but few gamers noticed its wacky blend of sci-fi silliness and hardcore action. Those who did were infuriated by the game's obscene level of difficulty. Consequently, few gamers have seen beyond the first few levels.

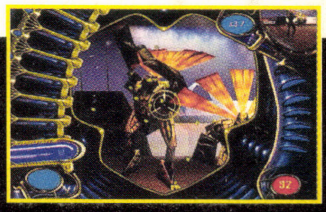
Luckily, developer Bioware has remixed the game for PS2, lowering the difficulty and slightly polishing the graphics. The game stars three zany characters: Kurt, the superhero sniper from the first MDK; Dr. Hawkins, a kooky inventor; and Doc, a surly, gun-toting dog with six arms.

If you're looking for a game that tickles your funnybone while exhausting your trigger finger, this is the one. ■









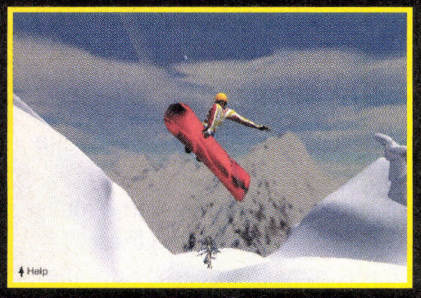
# SSX

**Publisher:** EA Sports
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now














Remember the PlayStation 2 launch preview in the very first issue of *PoJo's Video Game Review*? You don't? Well, shame on you.

Those of you who do remember it no doubt recall that we picked SSX — along with Madden 2001 — as one of the must-have PS2 launch games. Boy, were we right on the money — this game rocks!

The game takes the snowboarding genre to new heights by combining bruising bordercross action, insane tricks and devious shortcuts into a single game. Toss in some of the finest graphics ever to grace a console title, and you have yourself an instant classic.

Players begin by choosing one of four international characters, each with his or her own attitude and trick set. Then it's off to the world circuit, comprised by seven over-the-top courses.

How over-the-top are they? Well, the Aloha Ice Jam venue is an iceberg towed into port for the purpose of being carved up by snowboards. And the Tokyo Megaplex resembles a giant pinball machine, complete with oversized ramps, flippers and bumpers.

Clear a venue, and you'll be given experience credits, used to pump different aspects of your racer, including top speed, carving or stability. You might even earn a new board, outfit or rider.

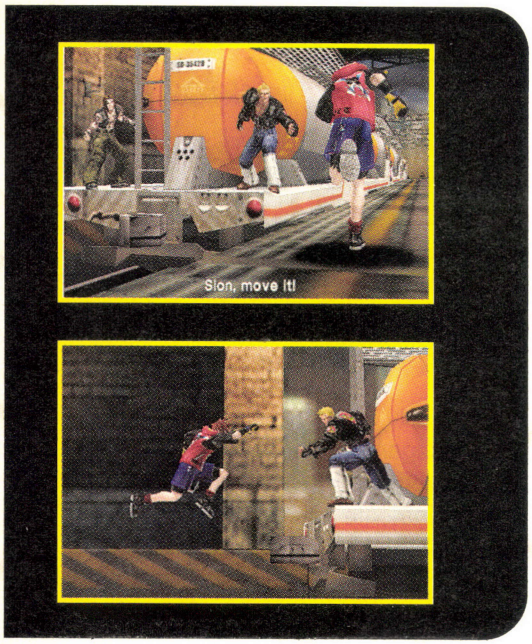


To top it all off, the game has four hidden characters, a bonus course, and a stellar techno soundtrack, with tunes provided by Mix Master Mike, Rahzel, Aphrodite and Mickey Finn and more.

If you've finally gotten your hands on a PS2 and are looking for a game that really shows off its capabilities, SSX is for you. ■

# The Bouncer

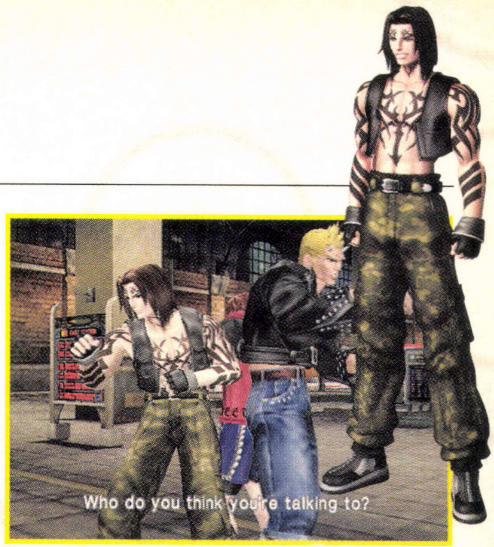
**Publisher:** Square EA
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now




Square is taking a gamble with The Bouncer, a high-profile street brawler in the vein of Double Dragon. This type of game is basically extinct, yet Square bravely infuses Final Fight-style gameplay with Final Fantasy-style characters and cut scenes to revitalize the world of beat-'em-ups.

The story centers on Sion, Volt and Kou, three burly bouncers who work the door at a popular club. When thugs kidnap Sion's main squeeze, the boys set out to rescue the poor damsel by breaking bones and smashing heads. All three heroes fight simultaneously, but only one can be controlled at a time. Depending upon which bouncer is chosen, different cinemas and stages unfold, enhancing the game's replay factor.

Each character has a massive arsenal of brutal moves that are unlocked as the game progresses, and all three bouncers can team up for devastating group attacks. In addition to the single-player experience, the game includes a cool Versus Mode in which up to four players can engage in no-holds-barred brawls.




Spectacular graphics, a groovy hip-hop soundtrack and full spoken dialog round out the package, making The Bouncer one of the premiere PlayStation 2 titles of the year. ■

# Super Bombad

**Publisher:** LucasArts
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** May



If you thought Jar Jar Binks ruined *Star Wars: Episode One—The Phantom Menace* with his hokey hijinx and pratfalls, you may want to steer clear of this hilariously cute kart racer based on the record-breaking movie.

All of the film's characters have been super-deformed, yielding cute racers with giant heads and squeaky voices (yes, even Darth Maul). The action is akin to Super Mario Kart, with a vast assortment of power-ups and dastardly gadgets to use against the competition. The game also has a number of challenging tracks based on the movie's most memorable scenes.

One word of warning: Gungan haters need not apply. ■

# Cool Boarders 2001

**Publisher:** SCEA
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now

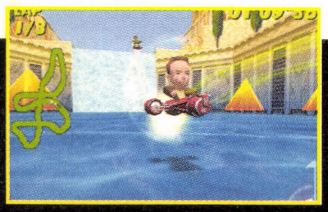


Sony's popular snowboarding series shreds onto the PlayStation 2, bringing realistic extreme sports action into the 128-bit realm.

Unlike EA's fanciful yet entertaining SSX, Cool Boarders 2001 features real boarders, authentic locations and genuine equipment. Whether you want to perform a multitude of radical tricks on the halfpipe or duke it out against a pack of other boarders in a wild bordercross race, this game has what you desire.

While the game is based on its popular 32-bit forerunners, the graphical ante will undoubtedly be upped for this inaugural PS2 debut. ■



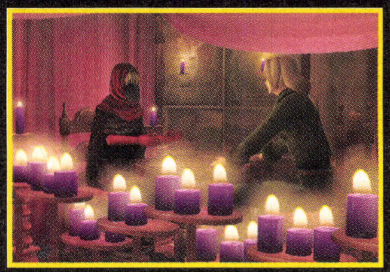


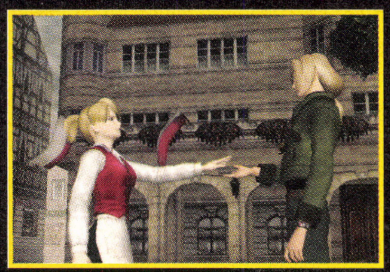




# Shadow of Destiny

**Publisher:** Konami
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now





It sucks to be this game's main character — he dies in its opening scene and buys the farm once again in each of its nine chapters if you can't figure out how to travel back in time to change his destiny. This gives the game a real palpable sense of tension as you race around solving puzzles while searching for clues about your killer.

With full character voiceovers, life-like graphics, multiple story paths that change upon the actions taken, and a riveting story penned by Junko Kawano of the Suikoden series, Shadow of Destiny defines the next generation of adventure games.

The game's beautifully rendered European environments change and evolve depending on the time period. Bury an item in the past, and it just might be waiting for you decades in the future.





The game has over three hours of game-engine movies that reveal the plot's intricate twists and turns. The game also has multiple endings and additional scenes that can discovered when the game is re-played. ■

# Dark Cloud

**Publisher:** SCEA
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now





Dark Cloud is Sony's first PlayStation 2 foray into action role-playing. Being an action game, there's a lot of hacking and slashing — but that's broken up by the game's interesting "Georama System." As you defeat monsters in the game's dungeons, you rescue townspeople and thereby repopulate the game's devastated world. As these townspeople come back, you build the town yourself by placing buildings on a map.

When you're not building your town, you'll be traversing vast dungeons filled with enemies. These caverns are most reminiscent of the N64 Zelda games, with lock-on targeting and sword-swinging action.

In between you'll have to travel to town to rest up, repair your weapons, and further the plot. Dungeons are randomly generated, meaning you can have a different adventure every time you play.

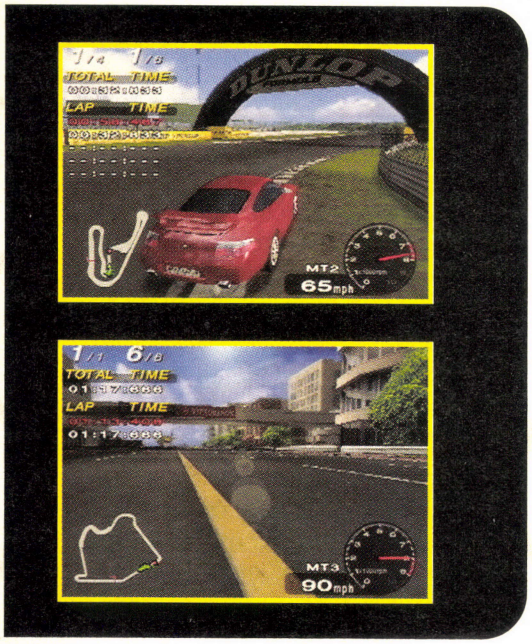


With characters like the heroic Toan and the malevolent Djinn, the game oozes with personality. The cute, anime-style graphics liven up what might otherwise have become a textbook RPG.

If you're hankering for an involving quest that lives up to the expectations dashed by such PS2 stinkers as Orphen, Eternal Ring and Evergrace, Dark Cloud is the action RPG for you. ■

# Driving Emotion Type-S

○○○○ **Publisher:** Square EA
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** Now




Square's attractive racing simulation received quite a beating from the critics when it was released last year in Japan. Sure, it had beautiful graphics, but the unbelievably sluggish control caused many players to deem it the "Drunk Driving Simulator." Thankfully, Square listened to the complaints of Japanese gamers, and the gameplay of the U.S. version of Type-S has been completely reworked. The steering now centers itself automatically (as it does in most games), correcting the biggest problem facing the import version.

With over 40 officially licensed cars, 10 beautiful tracks and a host of different modes, this game has a great deal to offer. The control, while manageable, is quite challenging when compared to arcade-style racing games like Ridge Racer V. A great deal of patience and finesse are required to succeed in this brutally competitive simulation. Driving fans seeking a realistic racing experience will find one here.




Complex gameplay, detailed graphics and myriad options combine to make Type-S a competent next-generation racing title. Sadly, with Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec on the horizon, Driving Emotion Type-S will have a short reign as king of the racing hill. ■

# Madden NFL 2001

○○○○ **Publisher:** EA Sports
○○○○ **Players:** 1-8
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Madden NFL 2001 was one of the first games to really take advantage of the PS2's incredible graphics capability. Wristbands, facemasks, tape, body hair and even veins are customed designed for each player in glorious 3-D detail.

You also get hundreds of all-time great NFL players, in-game trading cards that unlock special features, player-specific touchdown dances and taunts, a two-minute drill that lets up to 10 players compete for high score — the lists goes on. And did we mention that the patented Madden gameplay is better than ever?

Madden NFL 2001 is the unquestioned king of PS2 pigskin sims, until next season, that is. ■

# Tekken Tag Tournament

○○○○ **Publisher:** Namco
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



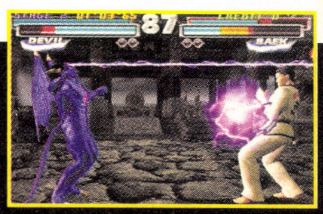
While it may not have the bountiful bouncing assets of Dead or Alive 2 Hardcore, Tekken Tag Tournament has firmly cemented itself as the premiere PS2 fighting game.

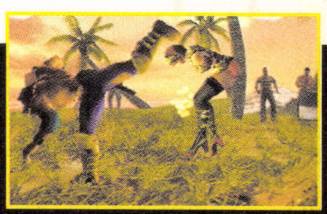
The game offers an absurd number of selectable characters, stages and options; Namco has combined the finest features from all three previousTekken games into this convenient package. The graphics obliterate those in the arcade version, the soundtrack rocks and it even offers a crazy bowling mini-game.

Tekken Tag Tournament holds the crown for now, but Soul Calibur 2 or Virtua Fighter 4 might dethrone it by the end of the year. ■









# NBA Live 2001

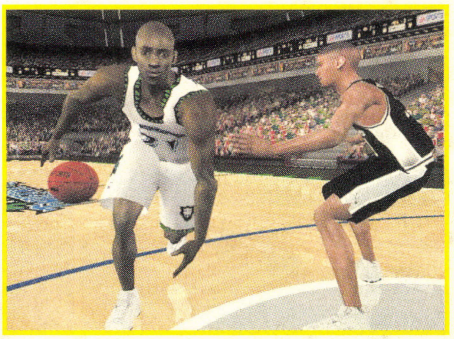
**Publisher:** EA Sports
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now





EA Sports' long-running basketball franchise graduates onto PlayStation 2 with spectacular graphics, a hip-hop soundtrack and the same classic gameplay that has been a series hallmark for years. While it isn't quite as breathtaking as Madden 2001's PS2 transformation, this title handily bests all the other PS2 B-ball titles.

Every NBA superstars have been accurately reproduced in 3D graphical splendor using EA's CyberScan technology, so each player's face looks eerily like its real-life counterpart. EA has also added new player interactions — teammates will offer encouragement to one another, celebrate baskets and contest calls with the refs. Even the crowds receive a graphical overhaul; fully 3D fans replace the cardboard cutout crew that populates most sport video



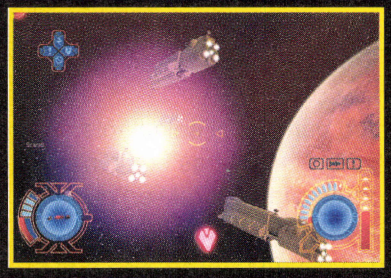
games. Every real NBA stadium has also been faithfully reproduced, and the home team engages in an entertaining boogie session before each game.

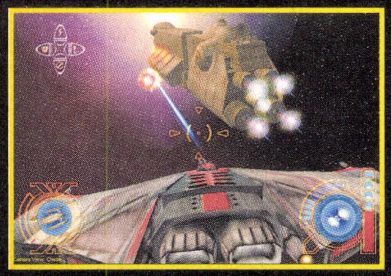
The game also features retired NBA legends like Michael Jordan and Larry Bird, who can compete in either 5-on-5 or 1-on-1 contests.

With a bevy of cool options, great graphics and familiar control, Live 2001 is the PlayStation 2 hoops title to own. ■

# Star Wars Starfighter

**Publisher:** LucasArts
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now





Games based on the *Star Wars* films are usually a hit or miss affair. Titles like Rogue Squadron and Episode I: Racer are good, memorable examples of licensing done right, but most of the other *Star Wars* games stink like Bantha droppings. Luckily, LucasArts' premiere PlayStation 2 title appears to be one of the good ones.

Taking place concurrently with *The Phantom Menace*, Starfighter follows the exploits of three vastly different characters. Rhys Dallows is a brave Naboo pilot who has been separated from his battalion. The sultry Vana Sage is a mercenary attempting to double-cross the greedy Trade Federation. Finally, Nym is a crafty space pirate who yearns to exact vengeance on the Federation for destroying his base. Together, this ragtag cast will help decide the



outcome of a colossal conflict.

The gameplay and presentation are very similar to the Colony Wars and Wing Commander series: intense space combat viewed from a third-person perspective. Some of the levels are interstellar dogfights, but others take place within the atmosphere of 10 different planets.

Beautiful graphics, a classic *Star Wars* soundtrack and tight play control make this a true rarity — a great game based on a movie. ■

# Final Fantasy X

**Publisher:** Square EA
**Players:** 1
**Genre:** TBD



Although it won't appear Stateside until Thanksgiving (or maybe even later), Square's Final Fantasy X is one of the most eagerly anticipated PS2 games of 2001. After the whimsical old-school style of FFIX, this new game returns to the more realistic-looking look of FFVIII, but rather than relying on flat, pre-rendered backdrops, FFX will be completely real-time 3D.

FFX has two main heroes, a dynamic coed duo made up of Tidus, a good-natured jock, and Yuna, a beautiful summoner. Along with the graphical overhaul, Square is also tweaking the overworld map (it now uses the same close-up view as in towns and dungeons), retooling the standard FF battle system, and adding facial animations to the characters. Another massive change



is the addition of spoken voices, a first for the Final Fantasy series.

Although the in-game graphics are now incredibly detailed and beautiful, FFX will still have thrilling CG-animated cutscenes like its PlayStation forerunners. The haunting musical score will also sound traditional, as longtime series composer Nobuo Uematsu returns to deliver a suitably epic score.

Overall, FFX should elevate the classic RPG series to new heights. ■

# Ridge Racer V

**Publisher:** Namco
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now



Namco's seminal Ridge Racer series zooms back with this latest entry. Players who have been around since the early days of PlayStation will remember how the original revolutionized the genre; while lots of racers have come and gone since then, Ridge Racer, with its blend of sharp graphics and arcade-style racing, still hangs on.

Boasting smooth, detailed graphics and a wide variety of tracks centered on the fictional Ridge City, RRV retains the series' trademark adrenaline-soaked gameplay.

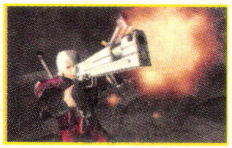
If you're looking for a tight, responsive, arcade-style racer, Ridge Racer V can't be beat. ■





# Devil May Cry

**Publisher:** Capcom
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Summer

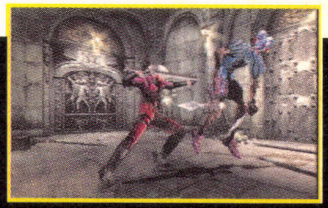


Resident Evil creator Shinji Mikami's first new PlayStation 2 title combines the ghastly horror of the RE series with furious gunplay action, yielding the video-game equivalent of *From Dusk Till Dawn*. You are Dante, a gun-toting devil hunter who is actually the spawn of a human woman and Sparda, an ancient demon. In addition to his hefty firearm arsenal, Dante also wields a giant sword like his father.

The action is much speedier than that of Resident Evil, and the graphics combine pre-rendered backdrops with impressive 3D characters.

A playable demo of Devil May Cry is included with Resident Evil CODE: Veronica Complete. ■






Mobile Monitor™ Color LCD Screen
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# Sony's PS One

SONY MUST HAVE BEEN THANKING ITS LUCKY STARS this holiday season that it had another video-game console, the PS One, to offer consumers besides the impossible to find PlayStation 2.

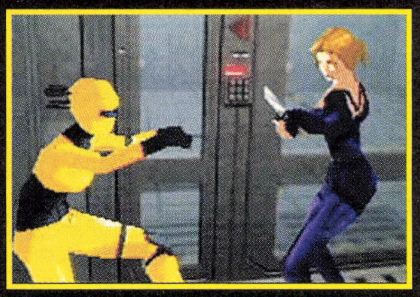
Much to Sega's chagrin, this redesigned version of the original PlayStation, priced to move at $99, was the best-selling video-game console of the holiday season, accounting for 35% of all console sales.

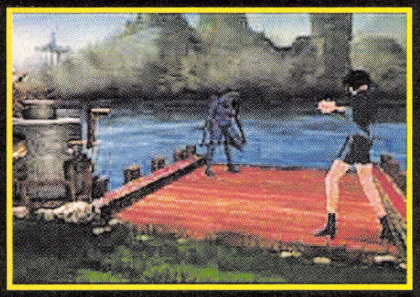
If you haven't seen the PS One, it's about the size of the boxes PlayStation 2 games (or DVD movies) come in, only thicker. What's more, both Sony and peripheral maker Interact offer optional mobile monitors that attach to the back of the PS One, turning it into a portable game machine.

Unfortunately, most game publishers, including Sony, have shifted the bulk of their development efforts to the PS2. Still, a few choice offerings continue to trickle through the software pipeline, as the following pages reveal.

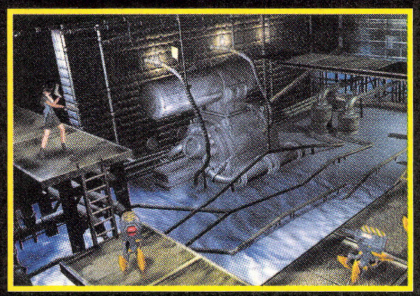
# Fear Effect 2

**Publisher:** Eidos
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now













The original Fear Effect was a beautiful blend of gunplay, puzzles and stellar graphics. Rather than continuing the story of the first game, developer Kronos has opted to reveal the origins of its characters in Retro Helix, a prequel that takes place before its celebrated predecessor.

Retro Helix reveals how the three mercenaries of the first game originally meet; Hana Tsu-Vachel, Royce Glas and Jakob "Deke" Decourt are all hired by a mysterious client to locate some ancient relics. The sultry Hana works with a partner named Rain Quin, a feisty blonde bombshell. Hana and Rain's relationship is quite groundbreaking for a video game, as it's extremely, ahem, close.

The narrative switches between the various characters as they scour locations around the globe. The gameplay mirrors the blasting and puzzle-solving of Resident Evil. A few notable improvements have been made to the gameplay since the first game. You can choose between both RE-style control and traditional "down is down" control. Also, there are no long load times after you die and you can make use of unlimited save game slots.

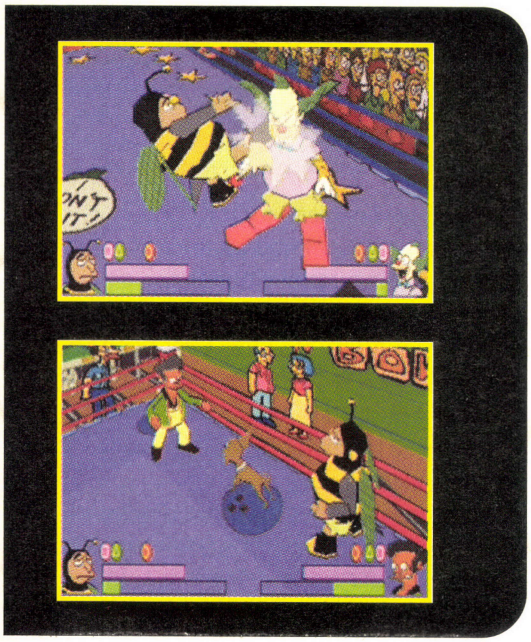
Fear Effect 2 continues the same amazing visual style of its forerunner: 3D polygonal characters with looping full-motion video backgrounds. This means that unlike Resident Evil's boring, static backdrops, all of Fear Effect's backgrounds are constantly moving.



As mentioned before, the game is full of mature content. It's difficult, gory, full of foul language and teeming with sexual innuendo — exactly the things that fans of the original are looking for. ■

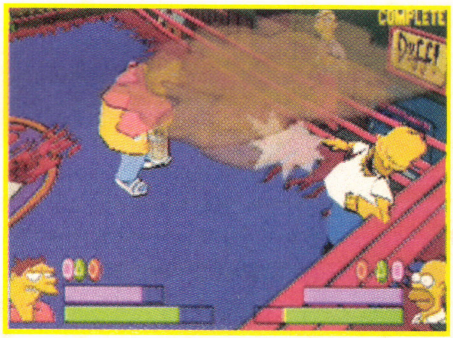
# The Simpsons Wrestling

○○○○ **Publisher:** Fox Interactive
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** Spring



It's difficult to believe, but *The Simpsons* has been on TV for 12 years, longer than any other current prime-time comedy. During that time, a slew of video games starring the bug-eyed, dysfunctional family have been released. While a few of these titles were decent (Konami's arcade brawler, for one), most of them were just uninspired platformers. Thankfully, the latest Simpsons title isn't another ho-hum run and jump contest – it's a no-holds-barred wrestling game!

Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie are joined by a mammoth cast of playable supporting characters like Krusty, Apu and even the guy in the bee suit. Each character is capable of unleashing a devistating signature move, like Bart's Wedgie, Barney's Duff Cloud Burp and Lisa's Pop Quiz.



The graphical style is crude and brightly colored, just like the TV show. Arenas are based on locations from Springfield, including Moe's Tavern, Barney's Bowl-O-Rama and the Kwik-E-Mart.

Perhaps the game's greatest innovation is a special taunt system offering over 240 verbal quips that can be strung together to insult your opponent. Now, Bart can sling a quick "eat my shorts" at Homer just prior to delivering the finishing blow. ■

# Final Fantasy IX

○○○○ **Publisher:** Square EA
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



With Final Fantasy IX, Square abandons the fairly futuristic feel of Final Fantasy VII and VIII, returning to the traditional fantasy style of the older 8- and 16-bit Final Fantasy games. Dragons, mages, princesses, knights and summoned monsters all return in true fantasy form. You control a motley band of lovable characters on a quest to rid the world of evil.

The gameplay is standard RPG stuff: you explore towns, dungeons and forests from a 2D overhead perspective, but the battles are 3D turn-based affairs.

As the final 32-bit installment of this venerable series, many believe that FFIX is the finest role-playing game available for PlayStation. ■

# Tony Hawk's: Pro Skater 2

○○○○ **Publisher:** Activision
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Tony Hawk's Pro Skater continues its domination of the PlayStation skateboarding scene with its sequel. If you thought the first one was good, you'll be amazed by the improvements developer Neversoft has made.

Want to create your own skater? You can. Want to make your own park? You can. If that's not your cup of tea, you can (as before) take a real pro to one of the game's many pre-designed courses.

New tricks abound, including "manuals," which let you link your combos together for more amazing scores. New music tracks and a variety of challenges round out its excellent qualities. ■










# Metal Slug X

**Publisher:** Agetec
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now



Konami's classic Contra series has all but vanished, but its spirit lives on it SNK's Metal Slug franchise. Publisher Agetec brings this Japanese arcade hit to the U.S. PlayStation, and all the blistering action remains intact.

Metal Slug X is actually a remixed version of Metal Slug 2; the graphics are a bit different, the bosses are moved around and new weapons are added, but the levels are basically the same.

You can take it solo or invite a friend to join you in an all-out shooting war against a wacky Nazi-like regime. Serious war machinery, brutal firepower and villainous foes are all drawn in a cartoon-like 2D style. This whimsical presentation doesn't detract from the intense gameplay, which is a carbon copy of traditional Contra shooting action.



As you progress through the war-torn stages you'll encounter an arsenal of powerful weaponry, including the Metal Slug itself, a transforming single-man tank capable of mass destruction. It is especially useful against the behemoth boss machines that wait at the climax of each stage.

While it may not have the flashy 3D graphics that most modern games sport, Metal Slug X is incredibly fun and addictive. ■

# Driver 2: The Wheelman Is Back

**Publisher:** Infogrames
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now

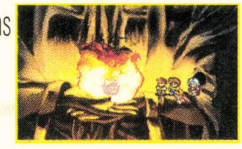


The first Driver captivated PlayStation gamers with its snazzy blend of serious driving action and cop-movie stunts. Driver 2 offers more of the same, upping the ante with more than 40 missions spanning the globe. Chicago, Las Vegas, Havana and Rio de Janeiro have all been faithfully recreated for your driving pleasure. You also have a larger pool of vehicles to select from, including a few '50s-era "lead-sleds."

As Tanner, the suave undercover cop from the first game, you must unravel a complex web of intrigue and deception by posing as a criminal yourself. Tanner now has the ability to exit his vehicle and take to the streets on foot, but the real action is still to be had behind the wheel. ■

# Lunar 2: Eternal Blue Complete

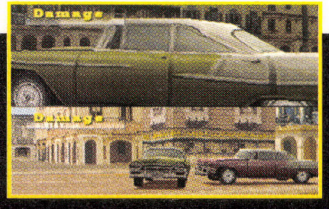
**Publisher:** Working Designs
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



Few players remember the Sega CD version of Lunar 2, as it was the final game released for a largely unpopular system. Thanks to Working Designs, a new generation of gamers can now experience this charming RPG relic on the PlayStation. Although it is visually dated by modern standards, the endearing characters, engrossing storyline and enchanting soundtrack are still enjoyable.

The price tag may seem prohibitively high for some, but it's truly a value-added package. Inside that mammoth box you'll find the game, a music soundtrack, a "making-of" disc, a hardbound manual, cardboard figurines and a pendant. What other game comes with jewelry? ■



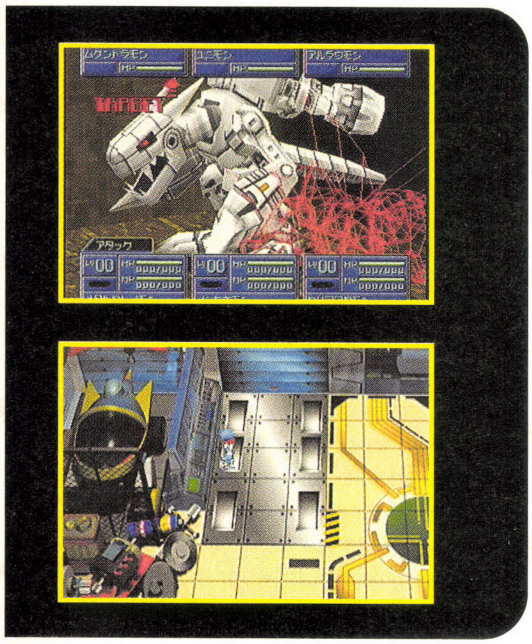


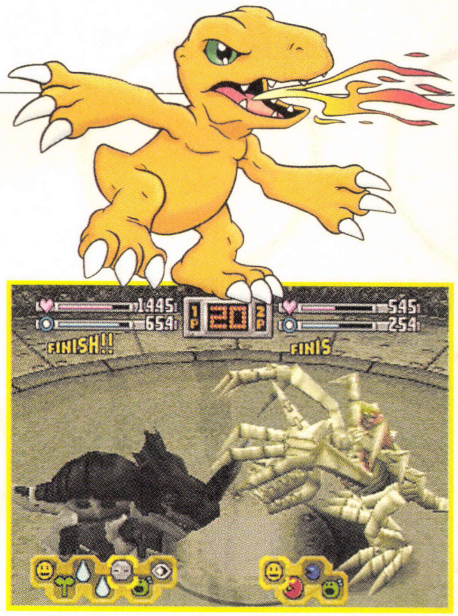




# Digimon World 2

○○○○ **Publisher:** Bandai
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** April





Welcome back to the digital world, where you'll collect and train Digimon in an effort to save the world from the evil that threatens to engulf it. This time around, a lot of improvements have been made to the game's formula. One of the best, directly borrowed from the Pokémon series, is the ability to catch Digimon yourself. Also, taking care of your captured monsters has been made easier as they don't need to eat or use the potty this time. That's right — this sequel features nary a speck of Digi-poop.

What you will find is a more robust battle system that allows for fights featuring three Digimon on a side, allowing for greater tactics and more immersive battles. You'll be able to join a team of like-minded digital heroes and even explore the digital world in your own car.

The game's graphics have also been greatly improved over the original. Fans of the cartoon series should have no problem being easily interested in this game. Anyone looking for a monster-raising RPG will want to give it a go. ■

# RC de Go!

○○○○ **Publisher:** Acclaim
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** Now

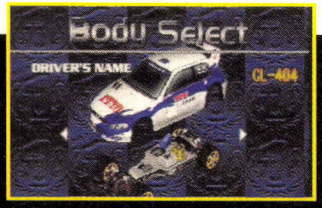


Remember an old racing game for the 8-bit Nintendo called RC Pro Am? In this classic, players raced remote-control cars around hazard-filled tracks, earning credits that could be spent on parts upgrades.

Acclaim's RC de Go! builds on this proven formula by adding 3-D graphics, analog control and real-life cars and parts from Japanese RC car maker Kyosho.

Players begin by choosing a chassis and body, then it's off to one of 14 different on- and off-road courses.

Initially, the hopped-up computer-controlled cars run circles around you. But after you add a better engine, brakes and other components, you'll soon find yourself in the winner's circle. ■







# Persona 2: Eternal Punishment

○○○○ **Publisher:** Atlus
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** Now

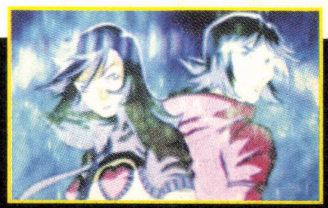


Re-enter a devilish world of mystery in this sequel to the early PlayStation RPG standout. This time, the game is reformatted in a much easier to take third-person perspective, but the modern horror theme remains the same.

You play as reporter Maya Amano, investigating a tip about a bizarre series of serial murders. From there, you'll be drawn into a conspiracy that could rock the very foundations of the world.

Employing a unique rumor system that allows you to mold the game's world to your wishes, Persona 2 is one of the deepest, most intriguing RPGs to come around in a long time. ■





# Rainbow Six: Rouge Spear

**Publisher:** Red Storm
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now





Rainbow Six for PlayStation did not compare favorably to its PC and Nintendo 64 brethren. While those titles emphasized team strategy and military planning, the PS game was a lackluster shoot 'em up with bad graphics. Still, it was quite popular due to its cool tale of tough military men versus wily terrorists.

Fortunately, the people responsible for the more than competent N64 version are in charge of the game's PlayStation sequel, Rogue Spear. Fans of squad-based military tactics should have nothing to worry about.

The game, as mentioned, stays much truer to its PC roots. That means you'll be leading a team of soldiers behind enemy lines. The game calls for planning as much as it calls for shooting skill, and if you don't study maps and figure out the best way to take down the opposition, you could be in serious trouble.



Paramilitary enthusiasts and heavily armed loners should have a blast with this high-minded first person shooter. While it may not fulfill your thirst for some quick violence, its tactical overtones allow for a rewarding experience for those interested in military operations. ■

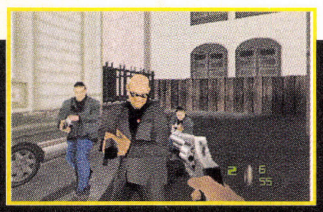
# Bond 007: The World is Not Enough

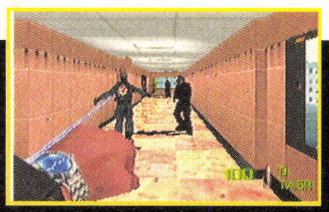
**Publisher:** Electronic Arts
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



If you were shaken rather than stirred by developer Black Ops' first James Bond game, Tomorrow Never Dies, you'll be happy to know that The World is Not Enough is much more like the N64 classic GoldenEye 007 than its PlayStation predecessor.

You control debonair super agent James Bond, blasting through first-person levels in classic form. Resident gadget guru Q hooks you up with over 30 killer weapons and devices, like a watch laser and a camcorder that doubles a GPS unit. The plot follows the events of the film, with the drama of an international oil conspiracy colliding with the (unintentional) comedy of Denise Richards portraying a nuclear physicist. ■





# Mega Man X 5

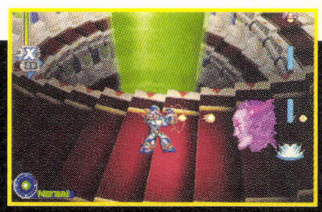
**Publisher:** Capcom
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now

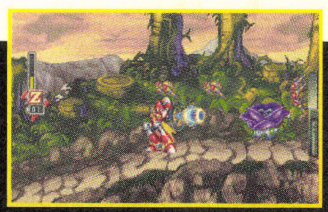


The Man is back. X and Zero return in their biggest PlayStation adventure yet. With eight more Mavericks to hunt and the ever-troublesome Sigma to deal with, you'll have your hands full.

As always, this X adventure takes place in 2D, but that doesn't mean you won't have all the action you can handle. With tons of new weapons, characters, and the threat of a space station on a collision course with the Earth driving you onward, this is one game fans of X's antics can't afford to miss.

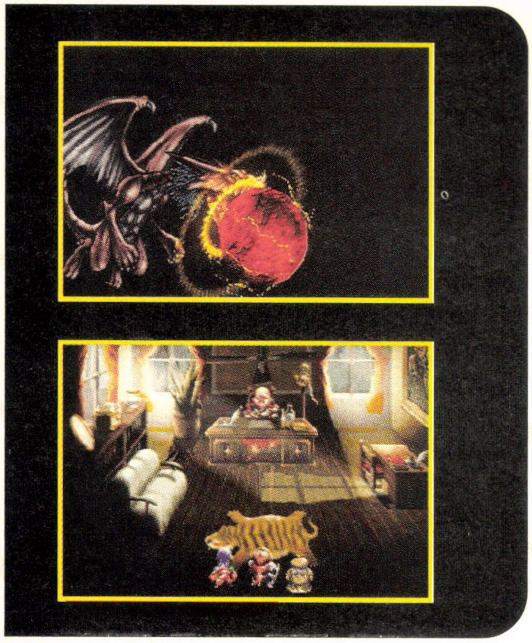
The Mega Man series may not change much over the years, but Capcom does know how to make an amazing 2D game. ■





# Arc the Lad Collection

**Publisher:** Working Designs
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** June

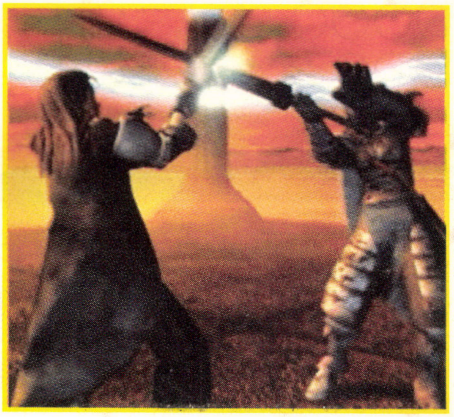


In the early days of PlayStation, when the first Arc the Lad came out in Japan, RPGs weren't so popular. They are now, and Working Designs has decided to package the whole series together in a fond farewell to the system that popularized the RPG.

In the first game (which dates back to 1995) you'll play as, naturally, a lad named Arc. He's a young hero set to right wrongs and triumph over evil in the usual way. In typical RPG fashion, you must gain stalwart companions as you move closer to your goal.

The more daring Arc II concerns Erik and his adventures, which begin in a large and much less medieval city. The cool bonus here is that you can transfer characters you earned in the first game into the second.

The third game concerns a boy named Alec and his exploits, and unlike the first two is presented in three-dimensional polygons.



A bonus disc containing a monster battling game released in Japan as a companion to Arc the Lad II rounds out the package.

Strategy RPG fans will surely find this to be the PlayStation's ultimate treasure chest. ■

# Crash Bash

**Publisher:** SCEA
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now



Everyone's favorite bandicoot is back, and this time he's doing the Mario Party thing. Grab some friends, a multi-tap, and get ready for an adventure in mini-game antics.

The recipe is as follows: Mix your favorite video game character liberally with friends and foes, throw 'em onto a graphical representation of a board game, shake well and serve hot. You'll travel through environs that call to mind Crash's previous adventures, but you'll be participating in mini-games and contests against your friends.

Crash Bash is one of the ultimate PlayStation party experiences and well worth your time if you have a handful of friends who enjoy the antics of an orange 'coot. ■





# WWF Smackdown! 2: Know Your Role

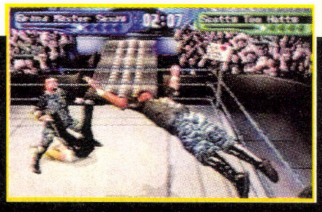
**Publisher:** THQ
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now

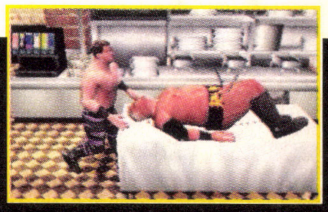


Publisher THQ hit the 'rasslin jackpot with its smash hit WWF Smackdown!, a ferociously fast and glitzy standout in a crop of sluggish wrestling titles. Amazingly, the sequel is even better than the original.

Fans cried out for the addition of ladder matches — a WWF trademark — in a sequel, and now you can live out your ladder-laden dreams in violent glory. You can also take the fight backstage, battling in the bowels of the WWF headquarters.

The popular Create-A-Wrestler feature proudly returns. Design your champion to be a leggy blonde like Sable or some towering, Frankenstein-like monstrosity (like John Tesh) – it's your call. ■





# Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

○○○○ **Publisher:** Activision
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** May





The people who brought you the Tony Hawk's Pro Skater games, Activision, have now set their sights on the world of freestyle BMX. As Mat Hoffman, or a variety of other pros, you'll turn tricks on a bike instead of a board.

Besides that, it's quite similar to its mega-popular brother in arms. Challenges and tricks abound in a variety of uniquely themed parks.

The game itself is based on the core programming laid down in the creation of the original Tony Hawk game. Of course, the first Tony Hawk was amazing, so this is a whole heck of a lot better than those other extreme BMX games.

If you have a fetish for bikes instead of boards, this would be the game for you. Of course, another reason to buy it is that you've played THPS2 to death and you're still looking for more. Of course, the number of quality extreme sports titles for PlayStation that can compete with the likes of a Tony Hawk-caliber title is few. That's why this game will be the PS extreme sports title of choice in 2001. ■



## Blaster Master: Blasting Again

○○○○ **Publisher:** Sunsoft
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Old-school gamers likely remember Blaster Master, a classic title for the Nintendo Entertainment System that sported killer graphics (for the time), memorable music and extremely high difficulty. Sunsoft revisits this beloved series with this PlayStation sequel.

Otherworldly monsters are creating havoc, so Ellie and Roddy (the children of Jason, Blaster Master's hero) vow to stop the encroaching menace. Just like good ol' dad, these kids use SOPHIA, a giant vehicle with incredible weaponry and hover abilities. The action may be fully 3D, but the spirit of the original Blaster Master lives on in this action-packed sequel.

The retro revolution continues! ■

## Point Blank 3

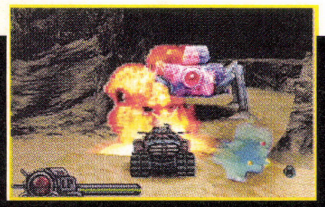
○○○○ **Publisher:** Namco
○○○○ **Players:** 1-8
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Namco's wacky light gun series is back, and it's time to dust off your Guncon, call your friends, and get ready to party.

If you've haven't played any of Point Blank's previous arcade or PlayStation incarnations, don't worry — there's nothing you really need to know besides how much fun they are. The game consists of tons of wacky mini-games designed to test your sharp shootin' skills, and before you know it, you'll blast the night away. This addictive mix of skill and humor has kept the Point Blank series fresh as so many me-too shooting games faded away.

If you're interested in a humorous test of skill, this is the game for you. ■



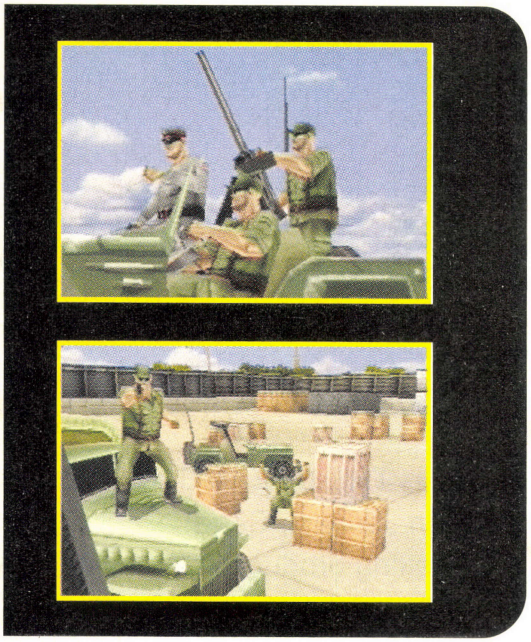






# Time Crisis 3

**Publisher:** Namco
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** June



The president of Caruba (you know, that island nation kind of like Cuba mixed with Aruba) has been assassinated, and secret agent Richard Miller has been framed for the crime. As the brave yet unlucky agent, you have 48 hours to clear your name, discover the identity of the true killer and unravel the mystery of Project Titan. Apparently, the easiest way to accomplish this is by shooting lots of people in the head... so let the bullets fly!

Project Titan is the first PlayStation-exclusive installment of the popular arcade series, and it is designed exclusively for use with Namco's GunCon light gun peripheral. Just like its predecessors, Project Titan offers four stages of intense shooting mayhem with multiple paths, power-ups and several different endings.

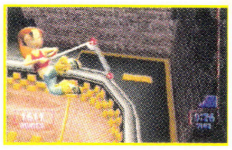


Unlike most other gun-shooting games, Time Crisis allows you to dodge incoming fire, which deepens the gameplay considerably. Project Titan improves upon this ducking feature by adding a new multi-hiding feature, which lets you view and attack from different angles.

Good PlayStation gun games are few and fare between, so shooting fans will want to sign up for Project Titan when it strafes stores this summer. ■

# Razor Scooter

**Publisher:** Crave
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



Take Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, replace the game's skateboards with trendy Razor scooters, add some kid-friendly controls and a zany cast of characters, and what do you have? Crave Entertainment's Razor Scooter.

Pick your kid, grab a scooter and pull off some crazy combos across three realistic levels. Perform tight tricks, like heel-flips, candybars, can-cans and supermen. Grind ledges, high-flying wires, barrels, and benches. You can even collect tokens scattered throughout each level to unlock extra parks and characters.

As an added bonus, this game is bargain priced at about $20, making it a great value. ■

# Aladdin: Nasira's Revenge

**Publisher:** SCEA
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now

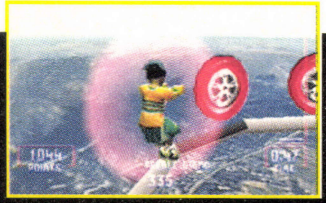


Put on those MC Hammer-style harem pants and dust off your magic carpet because Aladdin's back. This one's based on Disney's new sequel to the animated classic.

You'll control your Arabian pal (and more than a few of his friends) in a series of adventures ripped straight from the film. It's just like most other 3D action games; you'll have to avoid obstacles and enemies and travel through levels seeking specific goals, but fans of the animation will doubtlessly be enthralled by the way its top-notch visuals represent Aladdin's world.

Anyone looking for a Disney-flavored romp will want to give this one a go. ■









# Sega Dream




WELL, IT'S OFFICIAL — THE DREAMCAST'S days are numbered. In January, Sega announced that it's halting production of the 2-year-old console and slashing its price to $99 — equal to PS One's and N64's suggested retail price — to get rid of its remaining inventory.

The financially troubled company, which has lost hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years, now plans to publish games for competing systems like PlayStation 2 and Game Boy Advance.

Wait a second, new Dreamcast owners — come down off that ledge! The company has vowed to continue producing new games for the Dreamcast, which has an installed base of about 3 million in North America. All told, there are said to be more than 100 new first- and third-party Dreamcast titles currently in development, including Shenmue, Crazy Taxi, NFL 2K1 and NBA 2K1 sequels.

Even better, plenty of current Dreamcast offerings leave the competition — including Sony's vaunted PlayStation 2 — in the dust, as the following pages reveal.


cast
Dreamcast
POWER
SEGA
OPEN

# Shenmue

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



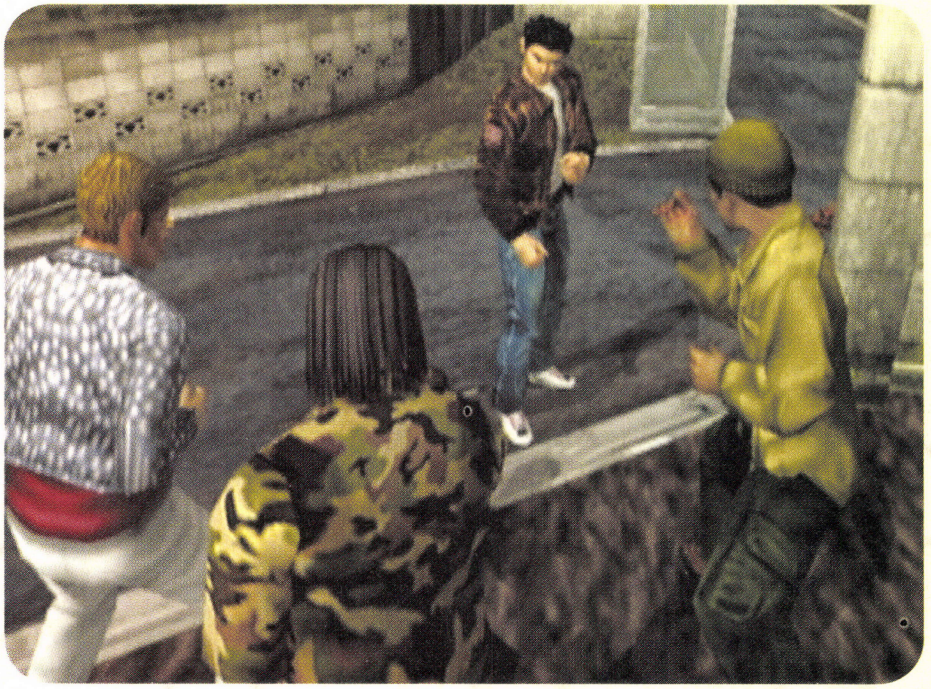












Before its release, many hailed Shenmue as the greatest video game ever. Well, it's not. It is, however, one of the most engrossing, visually stunning role-playing games ever.

Shenmue is the first console game created by legendary game developer Yu Suzuki, of Space Harrier and Virtua Fighter fame.

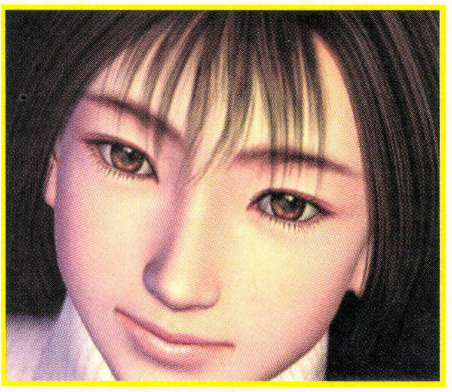
Set in Japan circa 1986, the game depicts a young man's efforts to solve the murder of his father.

While the plot isn't terribly revolutionary, the game's highly detailed 3-D environments are. The game is populated by more than 300 characters, each with his or her own backstory and daily routines.

You can also enter most of the game's buildings and interact with hundreds of everyday objects, from from lamps and telephones to arcade machines and forklifts. You can even pop into a nearby convenience story and buy some fresh tuna to feed to a stray cat.

Aside from exploration mode, the game also has short, dramatic scenes in which the player must press the right controller buttons within a given time limit. These so-called quick-time events range from chase and fight scenes to a sequence in which you must sneak by a security guard.

There is also a free battle mode in which the hero can battle multiple



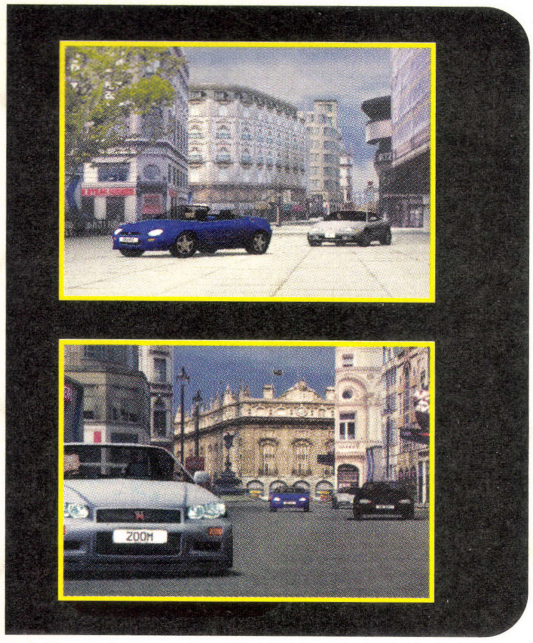
on-screen foes using Virtua Fighter-type moves, motion captured from real budo experts.

While the game is one of the most visually impressive ever, it's not without its faults; the first disc moves at a snail's pace, and you often feel like your watching a movie instead of playing a game.

Still, it's a must-play for rabid RPG or Sega fans. ■

# MSR: Metropolis Street Racer

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now



Dreamcast gamers clamoring for an answer to Sony's stellar Gran Turismo series have had to make do with the reasonably enjoyable (but not quite as polished) Sega GT. Now, developers Bizarre Creations bring us the ultimate in Dreamcast racing. And while it might not be as highly technical as Gran Turismo, it's one of the most accomplished, innovative and enjoyable racers since the genre took the leap to the third dimension.

MSR's gameplay is a half-and-half mix of outrageous arcade-style power slides and touchy, realistic steering. You'll be steering your real, licensed car through the beautifully replicated streets of Tokyo, San Francisco, and London as you try to score "kudos." These kudos points are awarded on style, and that's the crux of the game's play. The better



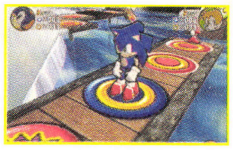
you race — the more finesse and panache you bring to the track — the better you'll do.

The game is split up into a slew of chapters, each filled with challenges to finish. You can even race split-screen against your friends in any of the breathtaking metropolitan locales you've unlocked.

Bringing a new level of graphical polish and fluidity of control to the racing genre, MSR is a true driving classic. ■

# Sonic Shuffle

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now



Mario Party-style, multi-player fun comes to Dreamcast with the release of Sonic Shuffle.

Like Mario Party, the game essentially is an interactive board game. Playing as their favorite Sega characters — including Sonic, Tails, Knuckles and Amy — up to four players move around five unique adventure boards, trying to collect the most precious stones.

Also like Mario Party, the game is packed with tons of easy-to-learn yet challenging mini-games. Among other tasks, players will find themselves playing jumprope with a giant snake and playing "hot potato" with live bombs.

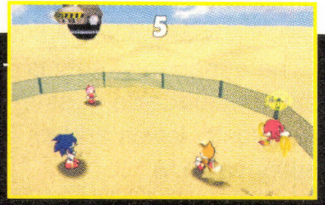
If you're a Dreamcast owner looking for a great party game, look no further than Sonic Shuffle. ■

# Grandia II

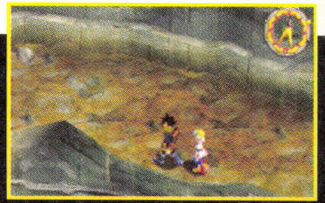
**Publisher:** Ubi Soft
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



Grandia II is the sequel to a lesser-known RPG for the PlayStation, but don't worry if you haven't played the first game. Just like the Final Fantasy series, the Grandia sequels don't directly relate to their predecessors. This game tells the story of a bounty hunter named Ryudo and his charge Elena, a songstress in the church of the god Granas. These characters are swept into a battle between — what else — good and evil. While there's not much new in the way of storytelling here, the lively anime-style characters and excellent graphics keep everything fresh and interesting, and the fun, innovative battle system keeps the pace from slackening. RPG fans need look no further than Grandia II. ■





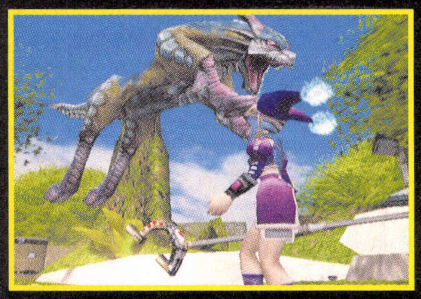




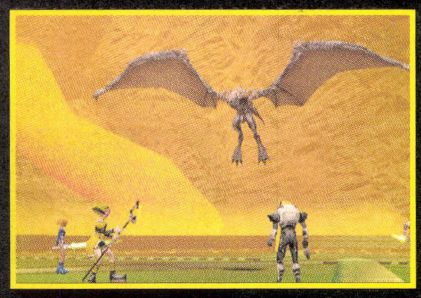
# Phantasy Star Online

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now













In 2000, Sega finally made good on its promise of multi-player online games by releasing a crop of sports, action and driving titles that featured Internet play. This year, Phantasy Star Online (PSO) takes online console gaming to the next level, infusing the world of role-playing with a true sense of community.

Creating your character is the first step, and with nine different classes and countless appearance options, you can customize him or her to your liking. Once you've crafted your character, going online is fast and easy. Choose a server and a "lobby" and you'll find a room full of other players chatting, goofing around and forming adventuring parties. Find some eager players, makes some friends and start your adventure! Of course, if you're feeling antisocial, you can always play the game offline.

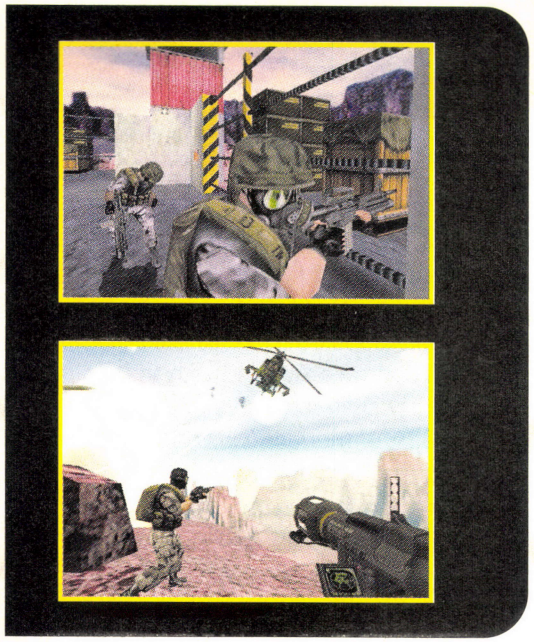
You'll encounter players from all over the world, so PSO offers a special chat function that will allow you to communicate with everyone at the same time. By using the pre-made Word Select menu, you can create questions and phrases that will be automatically translated into each player's respective language.

The game itself is just as impressive as its chat technology. PSO is a visually amazing action/RPG with deep, rewarding gameplay. All the action happens in real-time, so you'll be swinging your sword, running from monsters and casting spells in the heat of battle. Every weapon can be linked into multi-hit combos with the proper timing, so practice is key if you want to succeed. The dungeon variety is a bit slim, but downloadable quests and multiple difficulty levels add to the beefy replay value. ■



# Half-Life

**Publisher:** Sierra
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** April



The Dreamcast version of Half-Life has been simmering on the back burner for quite some time now, but a slew of massive enhancements over the PC original should make the wait worthwhile. Higher polygon counts and new visual effects yield graphics that blow away those from the somewhat dated PC version. Also, Gearbox Software (the geniuses behind the acclaimed Opposing Force PC add-on) has included Blue Shift, an exclusive 25-level add-on pack.

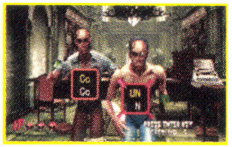
Half-Life attained its fame by being the first first-person shooter with a captivating plot. You're not just some lone marine blasting mindless demons; you are Gordon Freeman, an unfortunate scientist caught up in a web of betrayal and sci-fi suspense. In Blue Shift, you take on the role of Barney, a security guard trapped in the doomed Black Mesa complex.



Controversy has surrounded the question of whether or not DC Half-Life would include online play. Apparently, Sierra initially planned on including multiplayer modes, but subsequently reversed that decision. A separate online-only version may be released at a later date, but Half-Life will only be a single-player experience. Luckily, it's the best single-player first-person shooter of all time. ■

# The Typing of the Dead

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now



Sure, the premise of this game is incredibly goofy: House of the Dead 2 with keyboards instead of guns. While it is inescapably silly, the game is absurdly fun and surprisingly educational. Offing the undead with a swiftly typed phrase is funny, exciting and downright weird.

A variety of modes, options and difficulty settings can be configured so that typing newbies and masters alike can enjoy some zombie-packed thrills. Along with Phantasy Star Online, this game makes a DC keyboard worth owning.

Invite your keyboard-owning pals over for some serious two-player typing action! ■

# Coaster Works

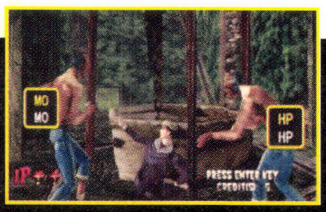
**Publisher:** Xicat Int.
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



Unlike most amusement park simulations, Coaster Works doesn't bog the player down with boring financial details, complex staffing issues or the task of placing decorative shrubbery. This game is all about building roller coasters, and no other console title offers a similar level of realism and customization.

New track pieces and features are unlocked as the game progresses, slowly unveiling an impressive array of twisted metallic loops, corkscrews and helixes. Attempt to create the most thrilling ride of all time, but remember to adhere to the laws of gravity and physics! ■








# Daytona USA: Network Racing

○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** Now







Racing fans often get all misty-eyed when reminiscing about Daytona USA. A true trendsetter, Sega's arcade classic assaulted the senses with 40 simultaneous on-screen cars, creative track designs and strangely fruity music. That same visceral racing thrill returns in this 128-bit update to Daytona, a blend of old and new that recaptures the spirit of the original while still looking sharp.

This Dreamcast version combines all three original arcade tracks, two courses from the Saturn-exclusive Daytona CCE and three all-new stages. All of the classic tunes (including fan-favorite "Rolling Start!") have been remixed for a more modern feel.

Of course, the visuals also received a total overhaul, and these detailed, beautiful graphics easily outdo those in the arcade original. The frame rate is a crisp 60 frames per second, each car has luxurious reflection mapping and no landscape suddenly pops out of nowhere.




You can race a friend with the obligatory split-screen versus mode, but a lack of friends won't keep you from racing against a human opponent in this game. Cruise over to SegaNet and challenge online opponents to a manic race for stock car supremacy! ■

# NFL2K1

○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
○○○○ **Players:** 1-8
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



A NFL2K was one of the must-have Dreamcast launch titles back in '99, and Sega tops that classic with NFL2K1, a SegaNet-compatible follow-up. It's the first console football game to feature Internet play, and getting online is a snap with the free 40-hour SegaNet trial included with the game. Amazingly, the Dreamcast's 56K modem offers a lag-free gameplay experience.

Developer Visual Concepts didn't include online play at the expense of traditional pigskin action, as all of the standard modes of single and multi-player action remain. NFL2K1 handsomely recreates all of the real NFL teams, players and stadiums, making it the Dreamcast football game to own. ■

# NBA2K1

○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
○○○○ **Players:** 1-8
○○○○ **Availability:** Now



Both major players in the Sega Sports lineup received an online injection, so NBA2K1, like its football counterpart, features Internet play. No other home basketball game can make the same claim. Finding an online opponent is simple, and gameplay is surprisingly speedy with the DC's modem.

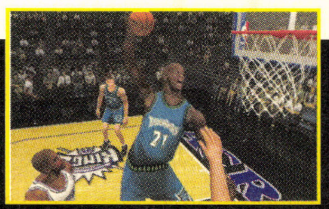
The offline game is as strong as ever, with improved player models, new dunk animations and trash-talking players and coaches. A complex franchise mode, standard season play and 8-player multi-player will keep you busy when you're not heating up the 'Net.

Dreamcast owners, this is the B-ball sim to buy. ■



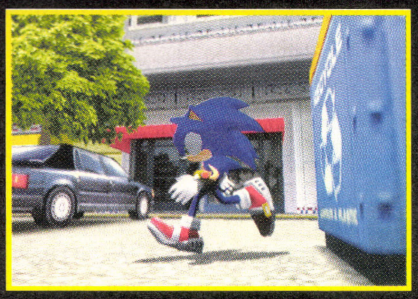




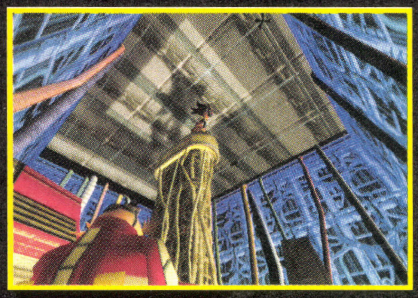


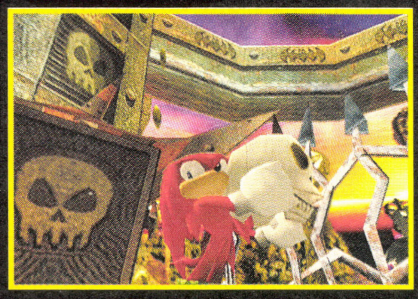
# Sonic Adventure 2

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** May









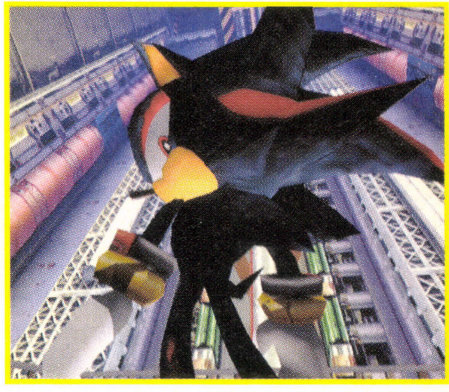




If you own a Dreamcast, you're probably familiar with Sonic Adventure. Not content to release the Dreamcast without an amazing action adventure starring Sega's mascot, Sonic Team whipped up this beautiful and inventive game in time for the DC's launch. A few years later, Sonic Team USA has conspired to bring us another adventure starring everyone's favorite blue hedgehog.

What's changed this time around? Well, since they're headquartered in the U.S., Sonic Team USA is making the game with a larger-than-life American flavor. Those of you who were lucky enough to play the demo that shipped with Phantasy Star Online may have noticed the San Francisco-style tang of that first level. Instead of Mayan forests and ruins, we can expect a much more metropolitan feel for this game.

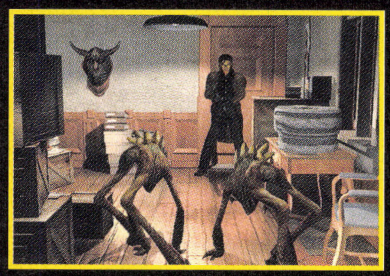
Another big change is the de-emphasis on the "adventure" portion of the game. While the first game had you trekking through Station Square and Mystic Ruin, expect a lot less troublesome setup this time around. The action never stops, which is great, because that's what Sonic does best. Graphics have been kicked up a notch or two. Expect amazingly detailed and large environments that will leave your jaw on the floor. Sonic even has some new moves up his sleeve



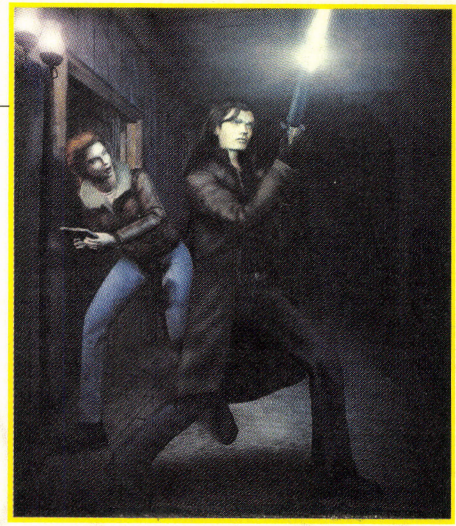
including the ability to grind on railings just like your favorite Jet Grind Radio or Tony Hawk kids. In addition, it appears that Dr. Robotnik (a.k.a. "Eggman") will be taking a backseat this time around as the game's villain, although that hasn't been confirmed. Regardless, this game is Sonic's biggest and best adventure yet. ■

## Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare

**Publisher:** Infogrames
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** June







Resident Evil? Bah! Survival horror had its start in the Alone in the Dark series. Long before consoles could push polygons, this innovative series of adventures brought true horror to PC gamers. Now, the latest game in the series works its signature creepiness on the Dreamcast audience. It's got graphics to die for and a mysterious plot starring the series' original hero, Edward Carnby.

Lured by the suspicious death of a friend, the intrepid explorer makes his way to the mysterious Shadow Island to discover the truth behind his friend's untimely demise.

Located off the coast of Maine, Shadow Island lives up to its name. Covered in dark and mysterious locales, the island hides many secrets you must unravel. Strange monsters have inhabited it, and if video games have taught us one thing, it's that monsters were bred to die. You'll have to exterminate the lot of 'em in your quest to unravel the mystery of Shadow Island.

With beautiful graphics and a long, engaging plot, Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare should impress all of Resident Evil's fans into acknowledging the true originator of survival horror. ■

## Jet Grind Radio

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



Jet Grind Radio is a difficult game to describe – it's a funky blend of evasive action gameplay, extreme rollerblade trickery and punk style. You control a fashionable crew engaged in a tagging turf war, a battle for vandalism supremacy in the fictional city of Tokyo-to.

In addition to rival gangs, you'll have to avoid the police; the fuzz will attack you with gas grenades, tanks and missile-armed helicopters.

Graphically, the game utilizes cel-shading to create a cool 3D cartoon look, lending the title a unique visual flair. A hipster soundtrack provides phat jams to inspire your spray-paint artistry. ■

## Unreal Tournament

**Publisher:** Infogrames
**Players:** 1-8
**Availability:** Now



Dreamcast first-person shooter fans have been fragging one another in Quake III Arena since last fall, but another popular PC shooter is now making the leap to SegaNet. Unreal Tournament offers over 35 beautiful stages of futuristic shooting mayhem.

Unlike the Internet-incapable PlayStation 2 version, the DC UT has online deathmatch and capture the flag options in addition to a lengthy offline mode. All of the colorful, creative levels from the PC original have been translated to the DC, and the action clips at a respectable 30 frames per second. ■



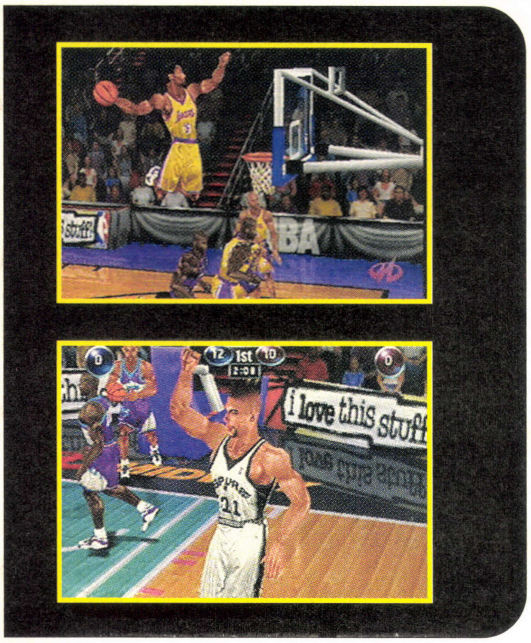






# NBA Hoopz

**Publisher:** Midway
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now



In the tradition of NBA Jam and NBA Showtime, NBA Hoopz brings you an ever-so-slightly-skewed take on the basketball genre, packed with arcade-style gameplay. As usual for these games, it has all of the basketball action you're looking for without many of the pesky rules that keep the game civil in the real world. You'll be able to score crazy shots, foul the other team, and basically go nuts in your pursuit of the win.

The game plays much like its spiritual predecessors. If your basketball player catches on fire (this is a good thing, by the way) you'll be able to run circles around your opponents and make just about any shot, whether or not they'd be possible in the real world. This action-packed approach to basketball has always made



Midway's games enjoyable, and NBA Hoopz is no exception.

Fans of the previous games will find a lot to like about this spine-tingling take on an already fast-paced sport. Midway has crafted what just might be the perfect basketball party game. Grab four controllers, call up three hoops-loving pals, and get ready for an intense battle for basketball domination. ■

# Mars Matrix

**Publisher:** Capcom
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** April



The developers of Giga Wing return with a brand new shoot 'em up. Mars Matrix sets you up against a raging armada in classic shooter fashion. Much like Giga Wing, dodging enemy shots isn't your only defensive recourse. You'll be armed with a special attack — the so-called "Mosquito" — that lets you ingest enemy fire. Save up enough energy and you can avoid getting shot.

Otherwise, this game is standard shooter fare. While the graphics, music, and sound effects aren't designed to impress, its innovative gameplay (innovative within the confines of strictly defined conventions, that is) should excite shooter fans looking for something new. ■

# Illbleed

**Publisher:** Jaleco
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



Crazy Games, the developer of Blue Stinger for Dreamcast, have come back with a unique take on survival horror. Unlike the deadly serious Resident Evil: CODE Veronica, Illbleed is inspired by films like *The House on Haunted Hill* and dares you to spend a night in an amusement park for a million bucks. Instead of being minions of an evil corporation, the endless swarms of undead are just part of the scenery. Taking visual and stylistic cues from so-called "splatter" movies like the *Evil Dead* series and *Dead Alive*, expect lots of spraying blood and mountains of decaying flesh in this wonderland of death. ■



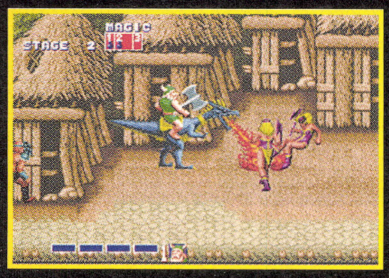


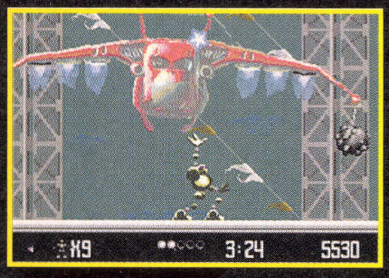




# Sega Smash Pack Vol.1

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now

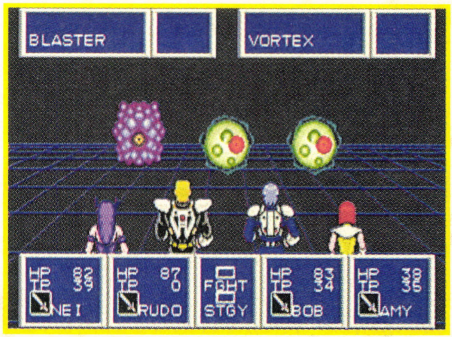





It's never too late to buy a Dreamcast. Sega may have started grazing toward other systems, but a ton of great titles make it worth your while. In fact, late adopters even get a special bonus: the Sega Smash Pack bundle includes this disc packed with classic 16-bit Genesis titles.

Take a sepia-toned walk down memory lane with Sonic the Hedgehog, Vectorman, Altered Beast, Golden Axe, Revenge of Shinobi, Streets of Rage 2, Columns, Wrestle War, Phantasy Star II and Shining Force. If you were too young to enjoy these classics back in their day, now is your chance!

The disc also contains Sega Swirl, a puzzle freebie, and an exclusive DC remake of Virtua Cop 2, a popular arcade gun game in the same vein as The House of the Dead.




This collection contains some of the finest Genesis games ever made, and the emulation used to run them is silky smooth.

The only noticeable difference is the somewhat strange sound emulation, as the DC couldn't precisely duplicate the exact music and sound effects produced by the Genesis.

You'll still have a barrel of fun making your way through these gameplay-rich classics. ■

# Bangai-O

**Publisher:** Crave
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



Japanese developer Treasure has a cult-like following of extremely devoted fans in the U.S., despite the fact that many Treasure titles never make it to Western shores. We're lucky that Bangai-O made the cut; its somewhat simplistic graphics won't win any awards, but its old-school gameplay is totally addictive.

The story is a goofy mess concerning kids, robots and evil fruit thieves, but don't concern yourself with such distractions. Bangai-O is all about shooting. A dizzying number of bullets, missiles and explosions pepper the screen with blinding light. If you have room in your heart for shooters the way they used to make them, check out this zany gem. ■

# Record of Lodoss War

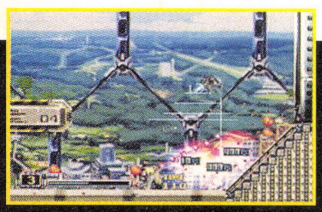
**Publisher:** Conspiracy
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now

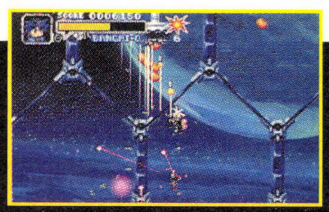


*The Record of Lodoss War* anime series tells the intricate tale of heroes Parn and Deedlit and their tribulations in a small, war-torn nation. Armed with their wits, swords, and spells, they must triumph over evil.

The same situation befalls you in this Diablo-style action RPG. It's pretty standard RPG (and, for that matter, anime) fare but the engaging dungeons and enemy battles will keep you coming back for more.

Those of you looking for a way to while away the hours exploring caves and slaying monsters should be very happy with this one. Fans of the anime who've always wanted to step into the shoes of the heroes should also be pleased. ■



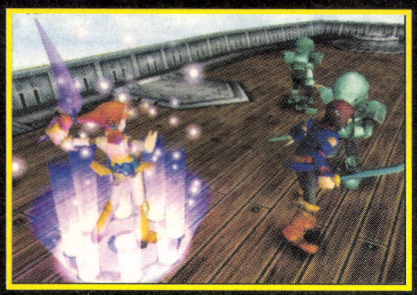


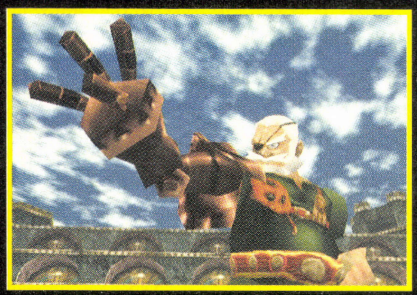


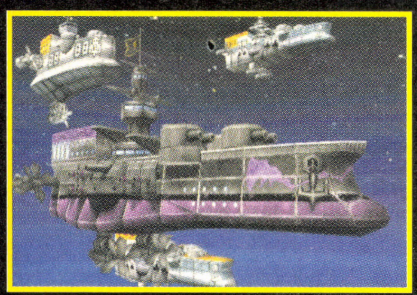


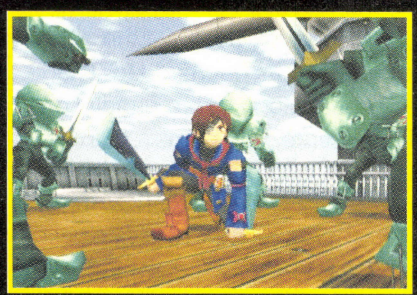
# Skies of Arcadia

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now

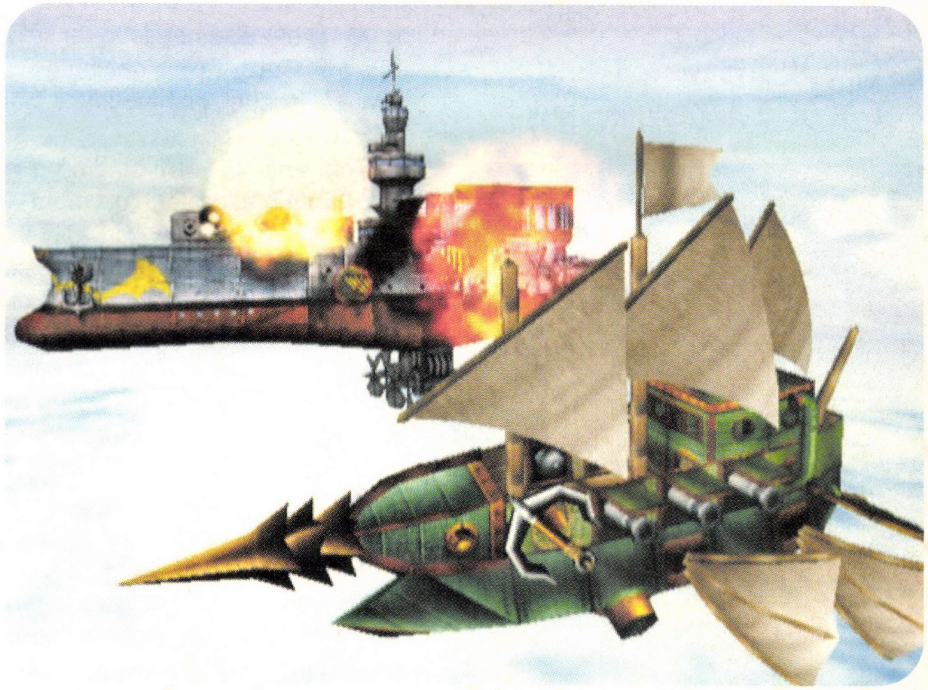












It may have taken a year for Dreamcast owners to receive their first true RPG, but believe us, it was worth the wait.

Developed by the creators of the classic Phantasy Star series, Skies of Arcadia is set in a world where people live on floating islands and use beautifully engineered sky ships to travel from place to place.

Players assume the role of Vyse, a sky-bound Robin Hood who steals from the rich and gives to the poor. His adversary is Garusian from the malicious Balua Empire, who attacks other sky ships and floating cities, killing innocent people and robbing them of their treasure. The empire is out to destroy the world and it's up to Vyse — and you — to save it.

Although a bit on the cartoonish side, the game's graphics are a marvel to behold. Each character has dozens of changing facial expressions, and spells and special attacks literally light up the screen. And unlike most RPGs, a floating camera captures all the action, even during field exploration.

The battle system, while far from revolutionary, is robust enough to get the job done. Members of your party draw from a common spirit pool to launch special and magic attacks. You can also equip your weapon with different elemental stones, which change the weapon's effect on enemies.

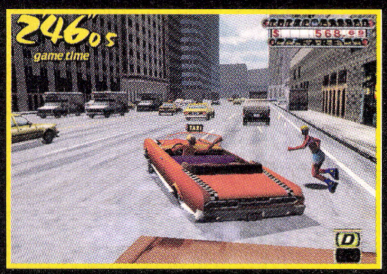


The game also contains dramatic ship-to-ship battles, which really spice up the action, despite being a bit on the simplistic side.

Despite some occasionally rocky voice acting and random, unavoidable battles that occur a bit too frequently, fans of old-school role-playing games will love Skies of Arcadia. ■

# Crazy Taxi 2

○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
○○○○ **Players:** 1-4
○○○○ **Availability:** May

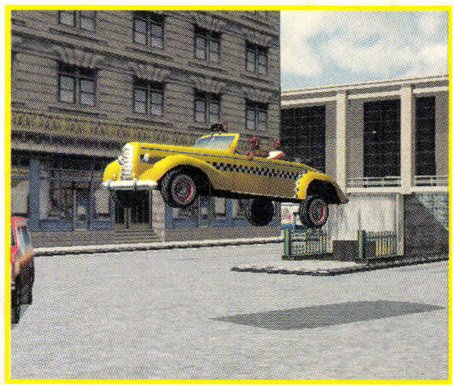





What else needs to be said? Crazy Taxi is getting a sequel. Want to know more? Of course you do.

This time out you'll be driving your cab through a locale that's more representative of New York City than the original's take on San Francisco. To do it, you'll have your choice of four new drivers: Cinnamon, Hot-D, Slash, and Iceman. These streetwise motorists pack the same wallop as the original crew, never fear. With increased emphasis on missions, multi-player modes, and improved gameplay, this is a true sequel.

This time around there's a lot more traffic — but you won't have to rely solely on Crazy Throughs to make it around the blockage this time. The game's designers have added a maneuver known as the "Crazy Hop," allowing you to leap over traffic.



What's more, this time you can pick up more than one passenger at a time. But beware, because they may want to get off at multiple destinations.

The game even features four-player split screen taxi madness! Developer Hitmaker has another game that lives up to its name on its hands. Crazy Taxi 2 adds everything you could want and more. ■

## 18 Wheeler: Amer. Pro Trucker

○○○○ **Publisher:** Sega
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Availability:** April

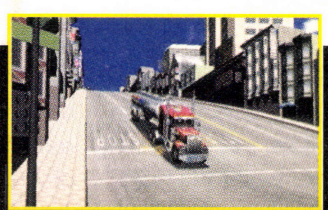


Want to learn to drive the big rigs? Now you can! OK, this one might not get you a license, but it's still time to haul across the country.

Out-drive your rival and reap the reward. You'll haul loads from coast to coast in this cross-country excursion. Take to the highway with a truck laden with goods — the more difficult and dangerous the trek, the more money you're awarded for a successful job. In between routes, try your hand at mini-games that take every ounce of your trucking skill.

Fans of Crazy Taxi who want to take their turn at another wacky occupation may find this one appealing, even if it lacks some of that game's frenetic action. ■





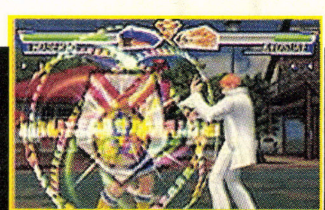
## Project Justice

○○○○ **Publisher:** Capcom
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Genre:** March



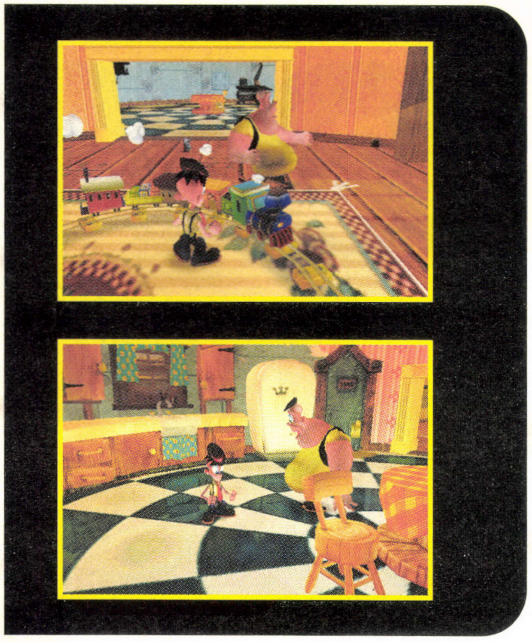
This fighter follows in the footsteps of PlayStation's Rival Schools, but thanks to the power of the Dreamcast, a lot of finesse has been added. The same wacky characters are back (along with a handful of others) and ready to settle the score. The game's team-based attacks are also back and crazier than ever. Thanks to the power of the Dreamcast, the game's graphics have been greatly improved over its predecessor. With a representative from each high school sports team and club you can imagine, there's a lot of variety. The gameplay does resemble many of Capcom's other fighters (the Street Fighter EX series, especially) but the game's creativity and style sets it apart from the pack. ■

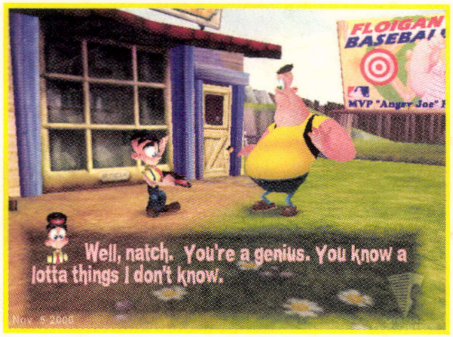




# Floigan Brothers

**Publisher:** Sega
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** May






Although best known for its popular NBA2K and NFL2K franchises, developer Visual Concepts is branching out into the world of action games with Floigan Brothers, a wacky platform/puzzle hybrid firmly rooted in comedy.

You control Hoigle Floigan, the brains of the junkyard-owning brotherly duo. While he's a shrewd operator, Hoigle requires his brother's brawn to accomplish tasks. However, convincing the bumbling Moigle to do your bidding is no easy task. You must trick the dull-witted oaf into performing actions by making him happy, sad or angry. In-game clues will let you know which emotion is required at each juncture.

The game isn't just about duping your bro into helping you. The nefarious Baron Malodorous, an evil schemer with designs on the family junkyard, hinders all this clever manipulation with his army of evil kittens (yes, kittens).

All this folly is presented in a zany cartoon style. Detailed, trash-filled environments, hilarious animation sequences and wacky voiceovers combine to create an interactive cartoon.

Visual Concepts also plans on making Floigan Brothers a serial series with new adventures coming out every so often. ■

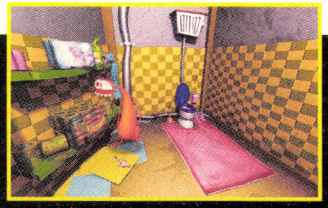
# Stupid Invaders

**Publisher:** Ubi Soft
**Players:** 1
**Genre:** April

Point-and-click adventure games are few and far between on the PC, let alone consoles. If you have a hankering to try your hand at one, though, Ubi Soft delivers. This game tells the story of some stupid aliens stranded on Earth. You'll control these incompetent invaders in their quest to free their captured cronies from the clutches of Dr. Sakarine, a mad scientist. Heaps of toilet humor and wacky sight gags round out the game's presentation. As far as gameplay goes, you'll be solving puzzles using items strewn about the environment.

Those of you who've been clamoring for a game full of twisted humor and traditional adventure elements can rest assured that Stupid Invaders won't disappoint. ■





# Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

**Publisher:** Activision
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** May

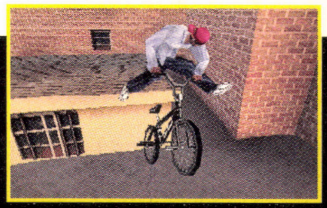


There probably aren't going to be too many more Grade-A extreme sports titles for the Dreamcast, but that's OK — we've got both of the Tony Hawk games and Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX.

This game is based on the same building blocks as the first Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, but instead of controlling the skateboarding legend and his cronies, you'll be able to get rad on a bike. Barring obvious differences in maneuverability, the game is quite similar to THPS. Of course, there will be grinds and tricks galore. A two-player mode rounds out the package.

Note: These screenshots are of the PlayStation version. Expect the DC version to look slightly better. ■





# Ninten



# do64



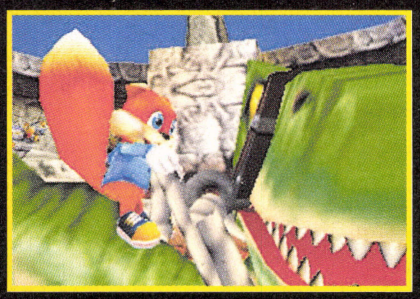
LIKE SONY'S PS ONE, THE NINTENDO 64 continued to rack up respectable sales this holiday season, accounting for approximately 22% of all console sales. In fact, it ran virtually neck-and-neck with Sega's Dreamcast, a 128-bit system with an included modem!

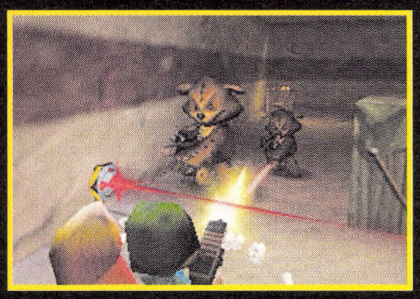
And with a worldwide installed base in excess of 25 million consoles, N64 software continues to sell like hotcakes. In fact, the best-selling game of last year was Pokémon Stadium, an N64 title. Two other N64 titles, The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask (which launced the same day as Sony's PlayStation 2) and Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, also sold in excess of a million copies.

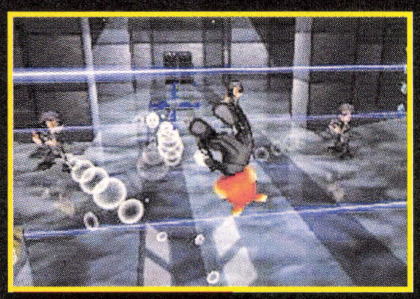
However, with GameCube's October launch just around the corner, the N64's days are clearly numbered. Grade-A titles for the aging system are becoming fewer and far between, as the following pages reveal.

# Conker's Bad Fur Day

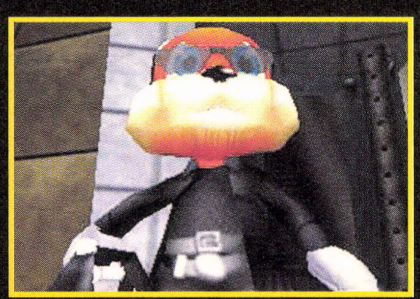
**Publisher:** Rare
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now













Think all Nintendo games star a portly plumber or a necktie-wearing gorilla? Think again. Conker's Bad Fur Day introduces gamers everywhere to a brand-new hero, a hard-drinking, cigar-chomping, frying-pan-wielding squirrel with an attitude.

Created by the makers of such hits as Banjo-Kazooie and GoldenEye 007, Conker's Bad Fur Day is filled with the rock-solid gameplay and gorgeous graphics Nintendo fans have come to demand, but that's not its main appeal; the real draw is the game's outrageous, bawdy humor — the kind of humor that would make the creators of *There's Something About Mary* blush.

As an added bonus, the game also includes a multi-player mode that allows up to four players to compete in a number of different games, including GoldenEye-style deathmatches! Combatants include heavily armed squirrels, weasels and teddy bears, who paint the walls red with an arsenal of weapons, including chain saws, machine guns and rocket launchers. Score a particularly nasty kill, and your character is likely to utter a taunt like, "It's dental record time!"

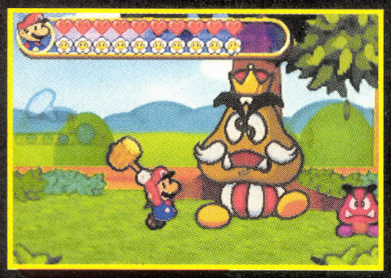


Needless to say, Conker ain't for the kiddies. The game carries a "mature" rating and is intended for gamers 17 and up. ■

# Paper Mario

**Publisher:** Nintendo
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now





In the waning days of the SNES, Square and Nintendo teamed up to provide gamers with an experience that would take liberally from the best of each company's talents. Super Mario RPG proved to be an adventure unlike any other. Unfortunately for Nintendo, Square left the fold after the SNES. But Nintendo's own Intelligent Systems, with its long history of RPG development, has stepped up and provided us with an amazing quest that rivals the original in every way.

Paper Mario casts you, once again, as the intrepid plumber. You'll — what else — be called upon to rescue Princess Peach from the clutches of the indefatigable King Bowser. As the game's title implies, Mario is



depicted as a 2D being in a 3D universe, and this charming effect gives rise to the game's unique visual style.

Otherwise, the game is an RPG that any of you Pokémon masters should have no problem playing, with turn-based battles and plenty of locations to visit. Mario and RPG fans should be satisfied that finally, Nintendo has provided an RPG worthy of the N64. ■

# Dr. Mario 64

**Publisher:** Nintendo
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now



Back in the day, when Tetris was a new phenomenon (on the NES), Nintendo followed it up with this pleasant diversion starring Mario. Taking the role of a doctor attacking nasty viruses with candy-colored pills, Mario showed he could groove on the puzzle tip as well as he could adventure.

The N64 version doesn't add a whole lot more in the way of play mechanics or graphical polish, but it does add a four-player mode that should keep you and your friends poppin' pills to the break of dawn. Puzzle fans who have been looking for an exciting follow up to Pokémon Puzzle League should find this one appealing. ■

# The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask

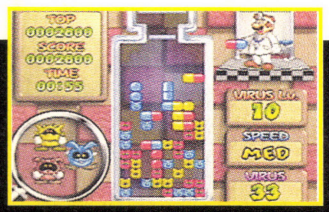
**Publisher:** Nintendo
**Players:** 1
**Genre:** Now



Appearing a scant two years after the first Nintendo 64 Zelda title, Majora's Mask carries the burden of living up to the high standard of its predecessor. Although it looks and plays much like its forerunner, Majora's Mask branches out with a darker tone, vastly improved graphics, a harsher difficulty level and several gameplay innovations.

This time Link is trapped in the doomed realm of Termina, and he must collect four legendary masks within 72 hours or else an encroaching moon will annihilate the world. Special masks transform Link into new forms with cool new powers and weapons. ■



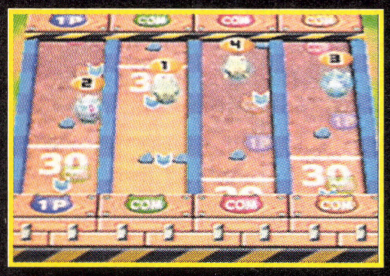





# Pokémon Stadium 2

**Publisher:** Nintendo
**Players:** 1-4
**Adventure:** Now



The original Pokémon Stadium was the best selling home video game of 2000, and Nintendo is hoping for similar success with this killer follow-up. This sequel improves upon its forerunner in numerous ways, but the single most important change is the addition of all 100 new critters found in Pokémon Gold and Silver. With 249 total Pocket Monsters primed for battle, this cartridge should please even the most demanding Poké-maniac.

If you have a N64 Transfer Pak, you can import your beloved critters from Pokémon Gold, Silver, Red, Blue or Yellow. The Transfer Pak can also be utilized to play any of the GB Pokémon games on your TV, much like the antiquated Super Game Boy.

In addition to allowing friends to battle their monsters on the big screen, Stadium 2 offers four new tournaments, 12 cool mini-games, a complete Pokédex, tricky Poké-quizzes and exclusive TMs for your creatures. Of course, the graphics and sound have been revamped as well, and the monsters' special attacks have never looked better!

Earl's Pokémon Academy is another handy addition. This training school will instruct you on all the best Pokémon-training tactics and techniques. ■

## Bond 007: The World Is Not Enough

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now



While not developed by Rare, the people behind the N64 classic Goldeneye, The World is Not Enough has shown that the 007 formula is perfect when it comes to first person shooters. The game has everything that you've been waiting for in an FPS, with engaging single-player missions, multiplayer mayhem that rivals Goldeneye and Perfect Dark, and amazing graphics that squeeze every last drop of performance out of the N64. You can play against your friends in a variety of different settings and choose from such modes as capture the flag, team play, and more. The game follows the movie's plot seamlessly. Movie fans and those craving a GoldenEye follow-up, this is the one for you. ■





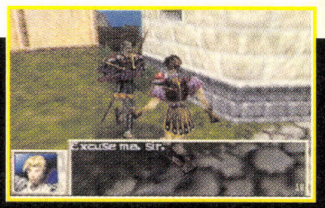
## Aidyn Chronicles: The First Mage

**Publisher:** THQ
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



If you want a traditional, swords-and-sorcery drenched RPG that calls up your noble adventuring spirit, this could be the one. Appearing as the N64 draws to a close, Aidyn Chronicles tells the story of young Alaron, a brave squire who's training to be a knight. As the game unfolds, he will of course have to gather companions and seek to triumph over the evil that threatens the world. The game, like many RPGs before it, features turn-based battles and a huge world to explore.

If you've been hoping for a tried-and-true fantasy epic to light up your N64, this may well be the game you've been waiting for. ■






# Mario Party 3



**Publisher:** Nintendo
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** May



The first two Mario Party games proved to be smashing successes for Nintendo; veteran gamers and non-gamers alike agreed that these digital board games were immensely fun. Highly competitive, easy to understand and infinitely replayable, the Mario Party games created a great new type of party game.

Mario Party 3 adds a few new characters to the mix: Princess Daisy, the ravishing brunette from Super Mario Land, and Waluigi, Luigi's vile nemesis who debuted in Mario Tennis. These newcomers join Mario, Luigi, Princess Peach, Yoshi, Wario and Donkey Kong in a wild quest for the all-powerful Millennium Star.

The action takes place on all-new themed boards, including Creepy Cavern, Woody Woods, Spiny Desert and Deep Blooper Sea. Over 70 new mini-game challenges will pit you against your friends, so hopefully your friendships will survive this fierce competition!

If your pals are unavailable, Mario Party 3 features a deep single-player quest mode. On this quest, you must defeat computer-controlled opponents while unlocking secret options and hidden bonuses.

Mario has proven that he knows how to throw a truly rockin' party, and this latest bash looks to be his greatest ever! ■

# WWF No Mercy

**Publisher:** THQ
**Players:** 1-4
**Availability:** Now

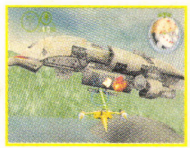


Following the success of WWF Wrestlemania 2000, developer Aki has brought another top-notch simulation of the spectacle and sport of the WWF to N64. Once again you'll be able to grab your favorite WWF superstar and take to the ring. In fact, the game sports over 65 characters, not to mention the fact that you can create your own.

With a lot of single and multiplayer modes to pick from, such as cage matches and Royal Rumbles, there's a lot of variety in this one. The best features of Wrestlemania 2000 are back, and you'll be hard-pressed to find a more complete or enjoyable wrestler on the N64. ■

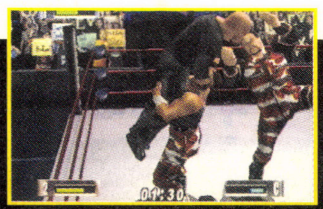
# Star wars: Episode I Battle for Naboo

**Publisher:** LucasArts
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now

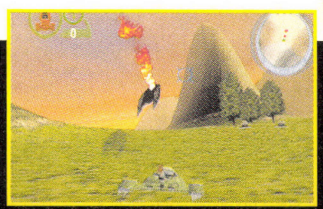


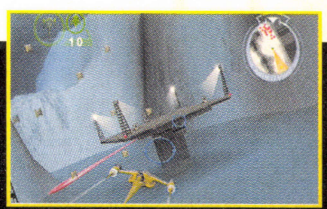
The team behind Star Wars: Rogue Squadron returns to the world of Star Wars, crafting this impressive shooter based on *The Phantom Menace*. Battle for Naboo chronicles the defense of Naboo while Queen Amidala is out gallivanting on Tatooine and Coruscant. Throughout the 15 missions you'll pilot seven different ships, including stolen enemy vehicles like the Heavy STAP and Trade Federation gunboat.

With its dazzling graphics, tight control and classic Star Wars background music, Battle for Naboo is another great LucasArts title for the Nintendo 64. And it's nearly 99% Jar-Jar free! ■









# Nintendo Game




IN JUNE OF LAST YEAR, NINTENDO SHIPPED ITS 100 millionth Game Boy, making it the best-selling video game system of all time. In the world of portable gaming, Game Boy stands virtually alone, enjoying a 95 percent-plus market share.

In October, Pokémon Gold and Silver for Game Boy Color, sold an astounding 1.4 million copies in the first week of availability, smashing another industry sales records.

What's it going to take to dethrone Game Boy Color? Another Game Boy, of course. In March, Game Boy Advance debuted in Japan, instantly becoming a hot seller. The 32-bit handheld, which is compatible with all existing games, is scheduled for a June 11 North American debut.

Still, as the following pages reveal, there are plenty of great games for present-day gamers on the go to enjoy.

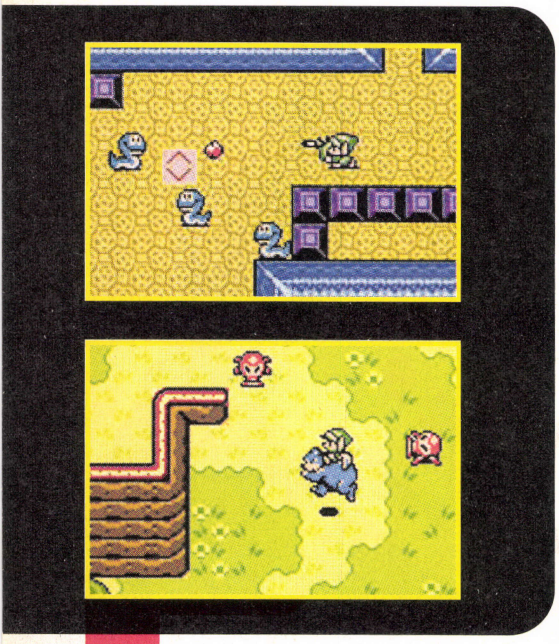
# Boy



## The Legend of Zelda:
# Oracle of Ages



○○○○ **Publisher:** Nintendo
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** May



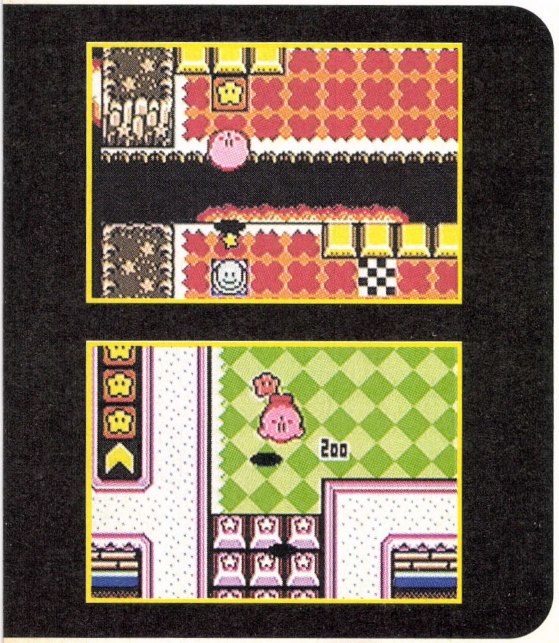
The long reign of the Game Boy Color (GBC) is ending, as the Game Boy Advance prepares to claim the spotlight from its aging forerunner. However, Nintendo has a final hurrah planned for the GBC – two completely new Zelda adventures that interact to form a massive new quest for Link.

In Oracle of Ages, Link accompanies Impa (Zelda's longtime nursemaid) to a faraway region of Hyrule in search of a talented songstress who can control the flow of time and space. However, once they locate this young girl, an evil spirit seizes control of the mysterious lass and disappears into the past. This dark force intends to destroy Hyrule by changing events in the distant past. Link is instructed to find a legendary harp that will allow him to enter the past save the world from its tragic fate.

You'll want to obtain both new Zelda games, as finishing one allows you to unlock several new features in the other via a special password. Link will start with more life hearts and a better sword and shield. He'll also encounter characters that he met in the previous game. New scenarios and special events are also unlocked, and you must complete both games in order to face the true final boss. ■

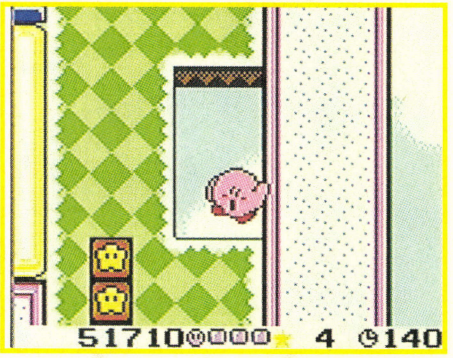
# Kirby's Tilt 'n Tumble

○○○○ **Publisher:** Nintendo
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** May



Game developers continue to squeeze fresh surprises out of the aging Game Boy Color, including innovations in cartridge technology. The Robopon cartridge beeps at you when it wants to be played, Pokémon Pinball debuted a built-in rumble feature and Kirby's latest GBC adventure is the first Tilt Pak game.

The malicious King Dedede has stolen the stars from the night sky, so it's up to Kirby to restore Dreamland's twinkling canopy of starlight. Here's where the tilting comes into effect; in order to guide the lovable puffball through Dedede's malevolent mazes, you must tilt your Game Boy! The angle at which you're holding the system affects Kirby's onscreen movement, so you'll be constantly moving your GBC around to keep Kirby alive.



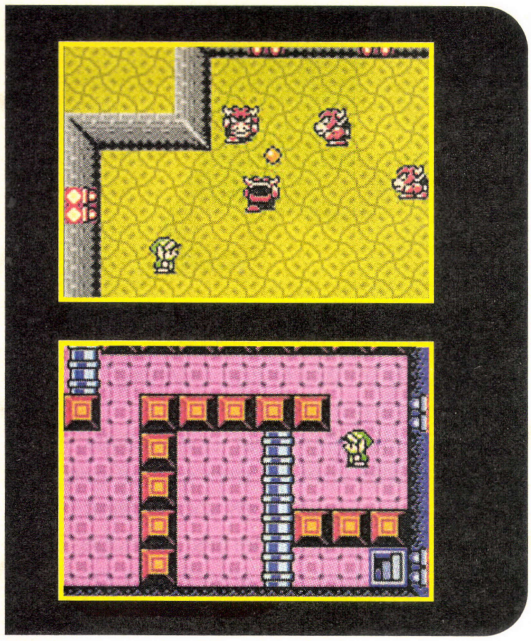

Our pink hero can still jump and acquire abilities from his enemies, but avoiding obstacles constitutes the bulk of the gameplay. A smattering of fun mini-games complements the main quest, offering a perfect opportunity to hone your tilting skills.

So, if you see people gyrating wildly with Game Boys in hand, they're not doing some goofy new Pokémon dance craze – they're tilting and tumbling with Kirby. ■

## The Legend of Zelda:
# Oracle of Seasons



○○○○ **Publisher:** Nintendo
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** May



Like the other Zelda game appearing around the same time, Oracle of Seasons is an all-new adventure based on the foundation laid down in Zelda: Link's Awakening DX. That's not to say that this is a retread; thanks to the talented companies involved — Nintendo, Capcom and Flagship — this is a whole new amazing adventure for Link.

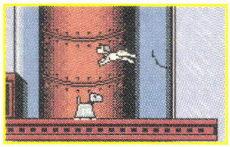
In this game you must try to (what else) save Princess Zelda and acquire the Rod of Four Seasons, a mystical relic that can control nature. This is, of course, directly counter to the machinations of Ganon, the bad guy who's been dogging Link ever since the series' NES beginnings.

The cool thing about this game is that once you recover the Rod of Four Seasons you can control the weather. Snow piled up so high you can't get into a cave or building? Try fast-forwarding to spring when it's all melted away. Is there an impassable lake keeping you from a certain spot? Maybe you should bring the chill of winter to the land and create a bridge of ice.

It's these inventive play mechanics that keep the Zelda series so fresh after all of these years, and Oracle of Seasons is another chapter that simply won't disappoint. ■

# 102 Dalmations

○○○○ **Publisher:** Activision
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Genre:** Now



Video games based on movies are usually greeted with skepticism, especially when they're for Game Boy. After all, most of them stink. Disney's 102 Dalmatians: Puppies to the Rescue is a rare exception.

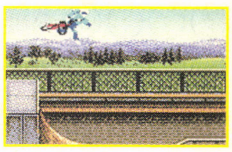
In addition to a few of the film's most-popular characters — including Oddball, Domino and Cruella — the game is chock full of kid-friendly, side-scrolling platform action.

The premise is simple: Find hidden keys to spring captured pups from their cages.

In addition to 17 levels and two mini games, the game contains a surprising amount of animation. Heck, you can even see the little pooches' ears flapping in the breeeze. ■

# Road Champs

○○○○ **Publisher:** Activision
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Genre:** Now

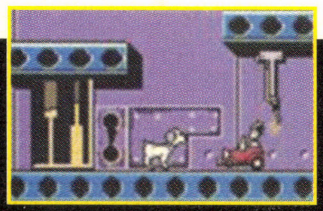


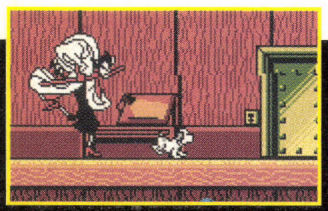
Extreme sports on Game Boy? Activision must be kidding, right? Wrong.

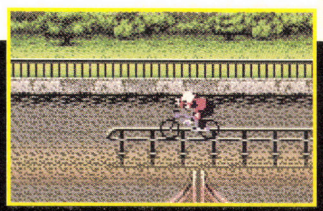
Road Champs BXS Stunt Biking plays like a shrunken version of the company's Matt Hoffman Pro BMX (for PlayStation), losing very little in terms of gameplay or visual appeal on the Game Boy's tiny screen.

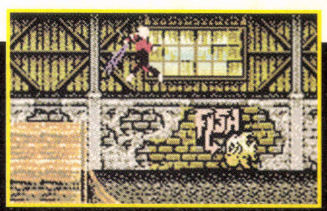
Players can perform 50 different tricks — a shocking amount given Game Boy's limited controls — from the four disciplines of BMX — flatland, street, vert and dirt. The game also includes four play modes and 64 different levels, ranging from city streets to skate parks.

BMX fans or Game Boy players looking for extreme thrills should check it out today. ■





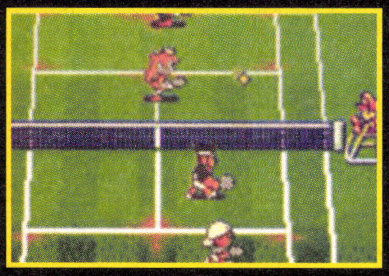




# Mario Tennis



○○○○ **Publisher:** Nintendo
○○○○ **Players:** 1-2
○○○○ **Genre:** Now






Camelot, the developer of Mario Tennis, is as well known for RPGs as they are for their sports games. That's why Mario Tennis has such a cool RPG-style quest in which you build up the stats of your character.

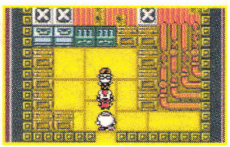
As you begin the game, you'll enroll in a tennis academy. There, you can train with coaches and other students to become the best in the school, eventually poised to win the championship. Your doubles partner will also learn with you. After both of you achieve glory, you can insert both of your characters into the N64 game using the GB Transfer Pak and enjoy them in full 3D.

The tennis portion of the game plays much like its N64 cousin, although the control isn't quite as precise due to the Game Boy's lack of an analog joystick. The game is still a high-quality and fun representation of tennis, though, and you'll be absolutely unable to find anything better on a portable.

With a lengthy quest, connectivity with the N64 version, mini-games and linked play to enjoy with your friends, this is one top-notch tennis cartridge that should keep you entertained for a long time. ■

# Metal Walker

○○○○ **Publisher:** Capcom
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Genre:** Now



Capcom tries its hand at Pokémon style monster-battling adventure with Metal Walker. Instead of controlling a variety of monsters you'll be in charge of robots. The game takes place in the late 21st century; the discovery of an evolving metal known as "core" leads to a battle to control a mysterious island. As a core hunter, you'll search for this mysterious metal while battling Core Busters, evil robots bent on keeping you from your goal. The game's battles are more action-oriented than Pokémon's, following a unique system that plays, at times, almost like a game of pool with balls bouncing in every direction. Fans of Pokémon who are looking for something a little different may want to check this one out. ■

# Mega Man Xtreme

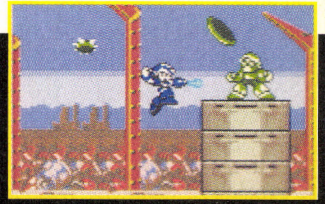
○○○○ **Publisher:** Capcom
○○○○ **Players:** 1
○○○○ **Availability:** Now

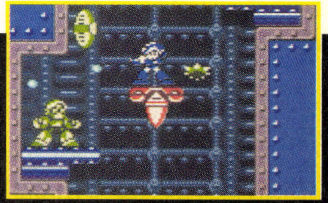


Join Mega Man X in a reprise of his first two SNES adventures. This game takes about half of each of those games, chops them up, and refits them in a new Game Boy Color edition. Those of you who aren't familiar with Mega Man (who are you people?) will be interested to learn that the MMX series follows the exploits of a robot called "X" who is constantly battling the mechanized minions of the evil Sigma. As you defeat these animalistic androids, you'll gain their powers and come closer to ending Sigma's evil reign. You'll be joined in your fight by Zero, a mysterious Maverick Hunter who wields a sword. The classic Mega Man X series has its foundation in this game. ■



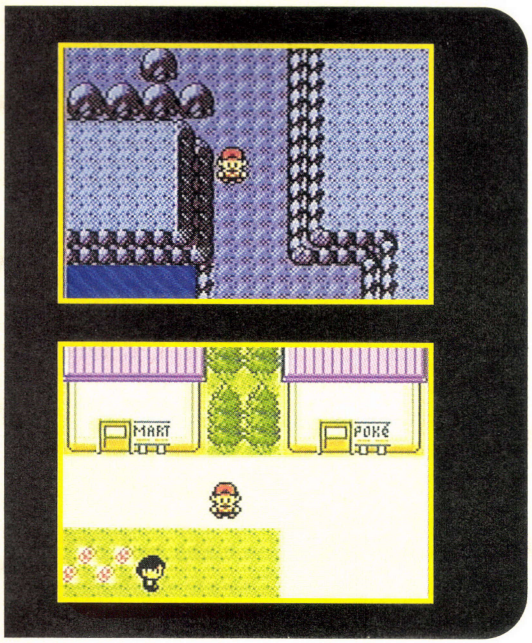






# Pokémon Gold & Silver

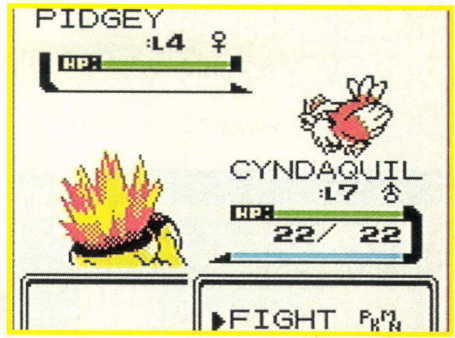
**Publisher:** Nintendo
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** Now




The unbelievable Pokémon phenomenon began with the original Game Boy games, Pokémon Red and Blue. Countless toys, cartoons, cards and spin-offs later, Nintendo offers the true sequel, Pokémon Gold and Silver.

Unlike the slightly updated Pokémon Yellow, Gold and Silver offer a completely new experience, complete with enhanced graphics, new worlds, new characters and 100 new Pocket Monsters. The goal remains the same — to become the world's greatest Pokémon trainer; however, you'll have to face a new world full of rivals, gym leaders and challenges to attain that prestigious title.

Your character is now equipped with the Pokégear, a handy device that serves as a Pokédex, cellular phone and a radio. During the game,




other characters will use it to reach your while you're out seeking elusive critters. The game also utilizes an internal clock; the in-game time mirrors the actual time at which you play the game. Certain Pokémon only show up late at night or early in the morning, so you'll have to plan your playing schedule to catch 'em all!

Gold and Silver both feature exclusive monsters, so you'll have to hook up with a friend to complete your collection. ■

# Mickey's Speedway USA

**Publisher:** Nintendo
**Players:** 1-2
**Genre:** Now

This Game Boy Color title shares all the wacky kart-racing thrills of its Nintendo 64 namesake. Join Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Daisy, Goofy and Pete as they race across a fanciful version of the United States in their trusty go-karts. You'll pass by national landmarks like the Washington Monument, the Grand Canyon and the Golden Gate Bridge.

Much like Mario Kart 64, this game features helpful power-ups, hidden courses and multiple difficulty levels. You can also challenge a friend to a crazy kart duel using the Game Boy Link Cable.

If you can't wait for Mario Kart Advance, Mickey's Speedway USA is worth checking out. ■

# Razor Scooter

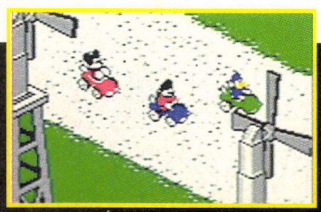
**Publisher:** Crave
**Players:** 1-2
**Availability:** May

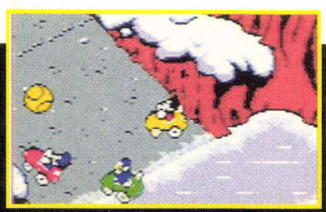


Scooters are the phattest fad in town, with over 3 million Razors on the prowl in the U.S. Now this extreme hobby grinds onto the Game Boy Color, courtesy of Crawfish Interactive.

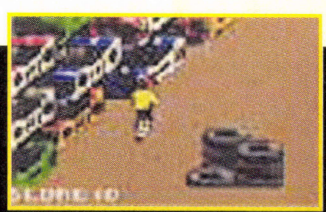
Pick your kid, grab a scooter and pull of some crazy combos across seven diverse levels. Grind on rails, leap over obstacles and grab mad air on the half-pipe! You can also customize your scooter for better handling, higher speed, and faster acceleration.You can even challenge your friends to a serious scooter duel using the Game Boy Link cable.

Extreme sports games usually don't translate well onto GameBoy, but Razor Scooter breaks that mold. ■



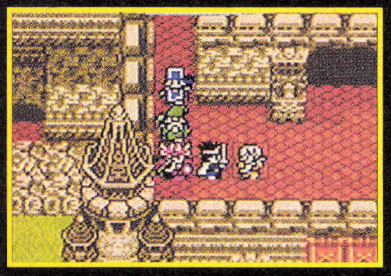


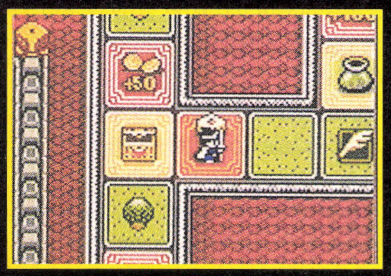




# Dragon Warrior 3

**Publisher:** Enix
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** TBD

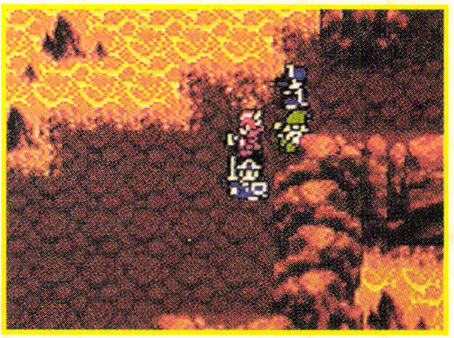




Following in the footsteps of Dragon Warrior I & II, Dragon Warrior III wraps up the story of the first Dragon Warrior trilogy. If you've been looking for a deep and engrossing RPG for your Game Boy Color, this is the ultimate quest.

Join a party of adventurers in your mission to destroy the archfiend Baramos, a devil so evil that he was the ultimate undoing of your noble father Ortega. The band of heroes you choose will have an impact on your adventure. As you can create companions with a variety of skills, it's up to you to decide who fits into your party.

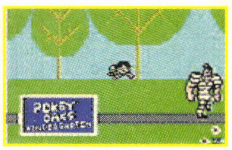
As you journey through the land righting wrongs and vanquishing evil, you'll learn more about the story of the Dragon Warrior series. The ending itself is an amazing shocker that will bring a smile to the faces of Dragon Warrior fans around the world. The lengthy quest should keep you occupied for ages.



The game's graphics push the Game Boy Color to its limits, featuring lush environments and beautiful backdrops rivaling any classic RPG. Story duties are again handled by series creator Yuji Horii. Dragon Ball Z fans will be pleased to know that creator Akira Toriyama takes care of artistic duties in the Dragon Warrior series as ever. ■

## The Power Puff Girls Battle Him

**Publisher:** BAM!
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



The third Power Puff Girls GBC game stars Bubbles, the effervescent blonde third of the trio. The first title featured Blossom in blazing battle with Mojo Jojo and the second game focused on Buttercup's searing scuffle with the Gangrene Gang.

Bubbles' turn in the spotlight is a less violent outing, as she is the most caring and sensitive of the girls. She must rescue allies and prevent impending disaster, but evil villains like Him, Seduca, and Mr. Mime attempt to use sinister psychology to undermine Bubbles' sensitive nature.

Power Puff fans looking to battle on the go should check this one out. ■

## Legend of the River King 2

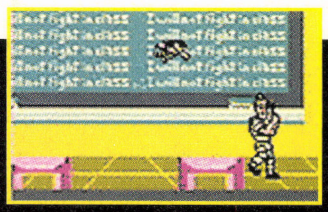
**Publisher:** Natsume
**Players:** 1
**Availability:** Now



Just as Natsume's Harvest Moon series mixes farming and role-playing, Legend of the River King blends the seemingly disparate worlds of fishing and RPG gaming. (We know, it sounds weird, but you'll just have to trust us.)

This seafaring sequel features over 60 different types of fish, with both freshwater and saltwater varieties. Your brave fisherman can also dive into the water to collect seashells, water faring insects and aquatic plants. Be careful as you travel back to town with your bountiful catch, as wild animals wait in ambush. If you're attacked, you must fend of the vicious beasts in traditional RPG battles. ■









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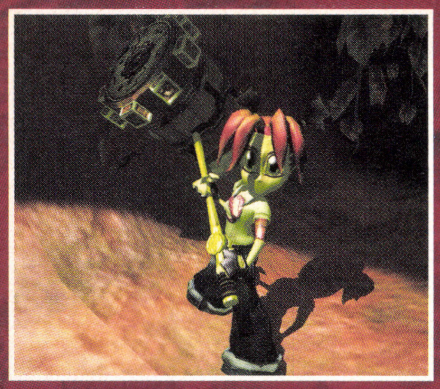
Animated Violence
Animated Blood

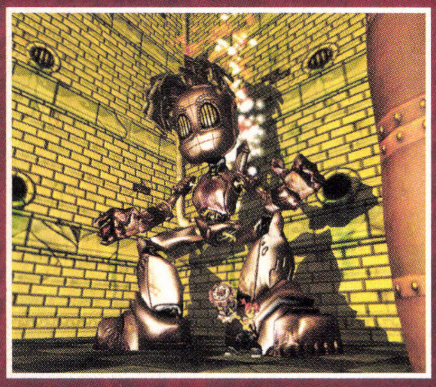
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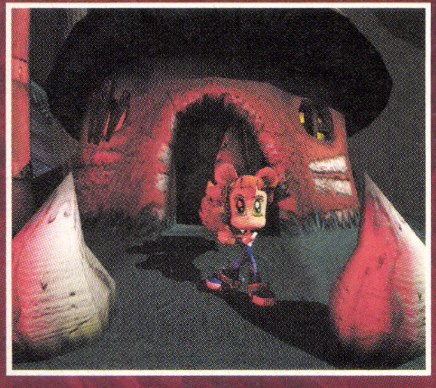
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Argonaut Games' Malice

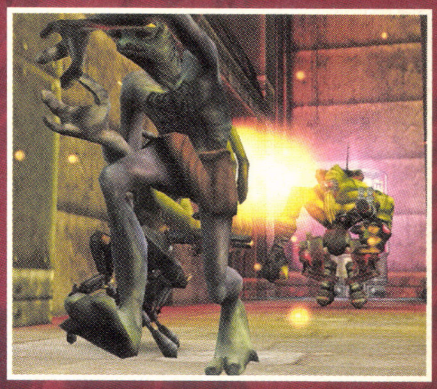


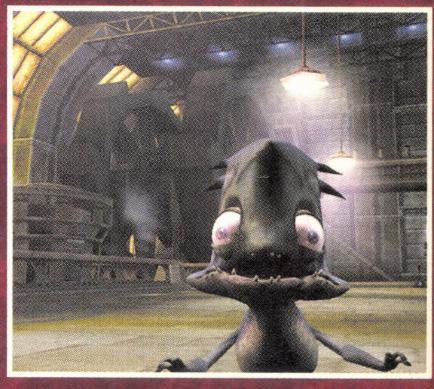

# The Box that Rocks











Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee

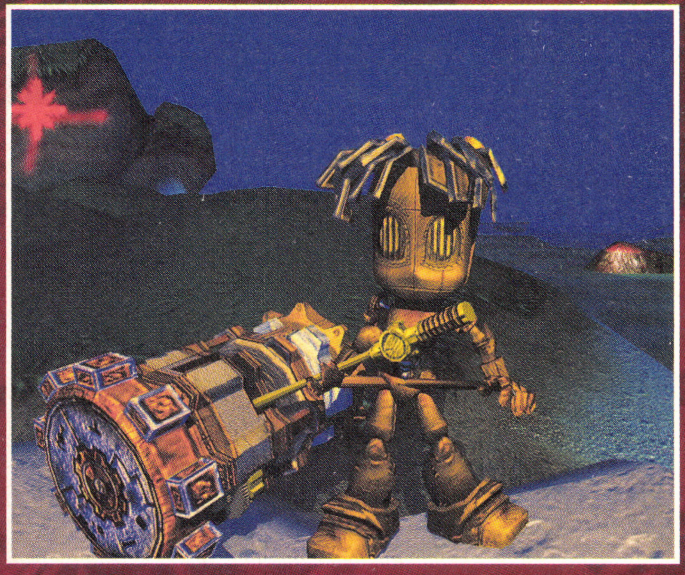
*Who do you call on to emphasize the power, style and aggressive attitude of your company's new video-game console? If you're Microsoft head honcho and multi-gazillionaire Bill Gates, you call on World Wrestling Federation superstar "The Rock." The five-time WWF champ recently joined Mr. Gates onstage during the finale of his keynote address at Las Vegas' 2001 International Consumer Electronics Show. Together the pair unveiled Microsoft's forthcoming home video-game console, Xbox.*

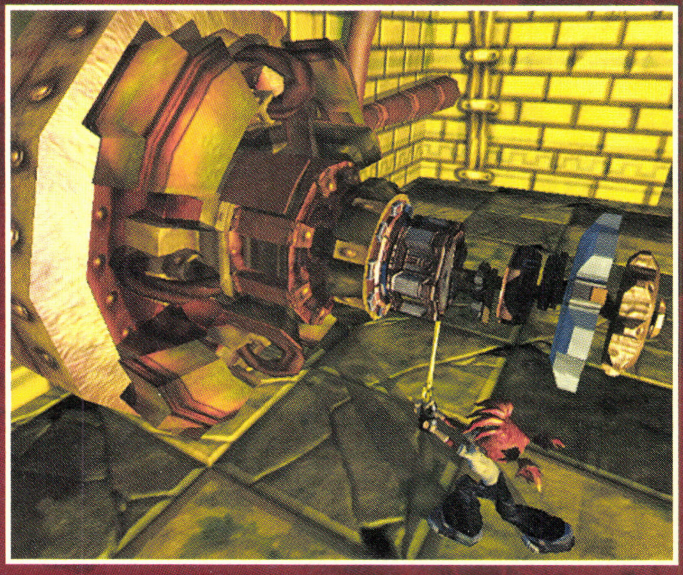
*"The Xbox is everything The Rock is, cutting edge, powerful and exhilarating," said the former champ. "And what The Rock is to sports entertainment, Xbox will be to the video-game industry, a breakthrough and certainly an original."*

*Coming from "The Great One," that's high praise indeed. What's even scarier is that Xbox has the specs to back up the bluster. Here are its vital statistics:*

# The Box that Rocks

More than 5,000 gamers were consulted for the design of the Xbox console and controller. Among other features, the system has four controller ports and a front-loading CD tray, allowing gamers to keep it in their entertainment centers.








- **Four game controller ports** that allow multiplayer gaming and enable other peripherals, ranging from game pads to voice-activated headsets
- **A front-loading DVD tray**
- **A multisignal audio-video connector** that allows for easy hookup to televisions and home theater systems, including HDTV
- **An Ethernet port** for fast-action online gaming via a broadband connection
- **An NVIDIA graphics processing unit** (GPU), delivering more than three times the graphics performance of other consoles
- **An Intel 733MHz processor**
- **An 8GB hard drive** for mass storage of game information
- **A dual-analog controller** with pressure-sensitive buttons, built-in rumble feature and a 9.5-feet-long cord

So, what does all that technical jargon mean? Simply put, video games are going to look and play better than ever before, thanks to Xbox's almost limitless power.

"The most exciting thing about Xbox is that it empowers game developers," says Seamus Blackley, one of Xbox's creators. "It unshackles them, so they can achieve the visions that they have in their minds."

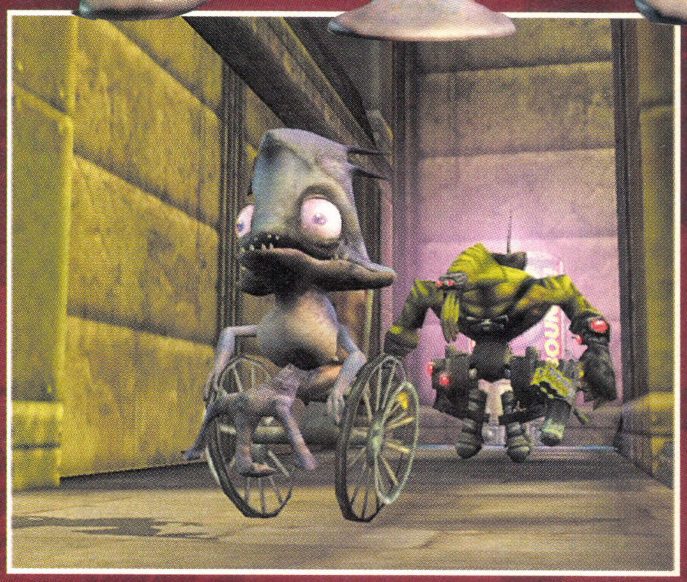
## But What About the Games?

The list of publishers who've already signed on to develop games for Xbox reads like an industry who's who; more than 150 companies — including Activision, Capcom, Eidos, ➜



**Munch, the star of the latest Oddworld game, has a mug only a mother could love. He also has tentacles instead of legs, putting him at a distinct disadvantage when on land.**





# The Box that Rocks

Infogrames, Konami, Midway, Namco and THQ — have pledged their support.

Mr. Blackley personally demonstrated early versions of two future XBox titles at CES, **Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee** and **Malice.**

PlayStation fans may already be familiar with the first two titles in the Oddworld quintology, Abe's Oddysee and Abe's Exoddus. The games, known for their quirky humor and bumbling alien protagonists, have sold more than 4 million copies worldwide and garnered more than 100 industry awards.

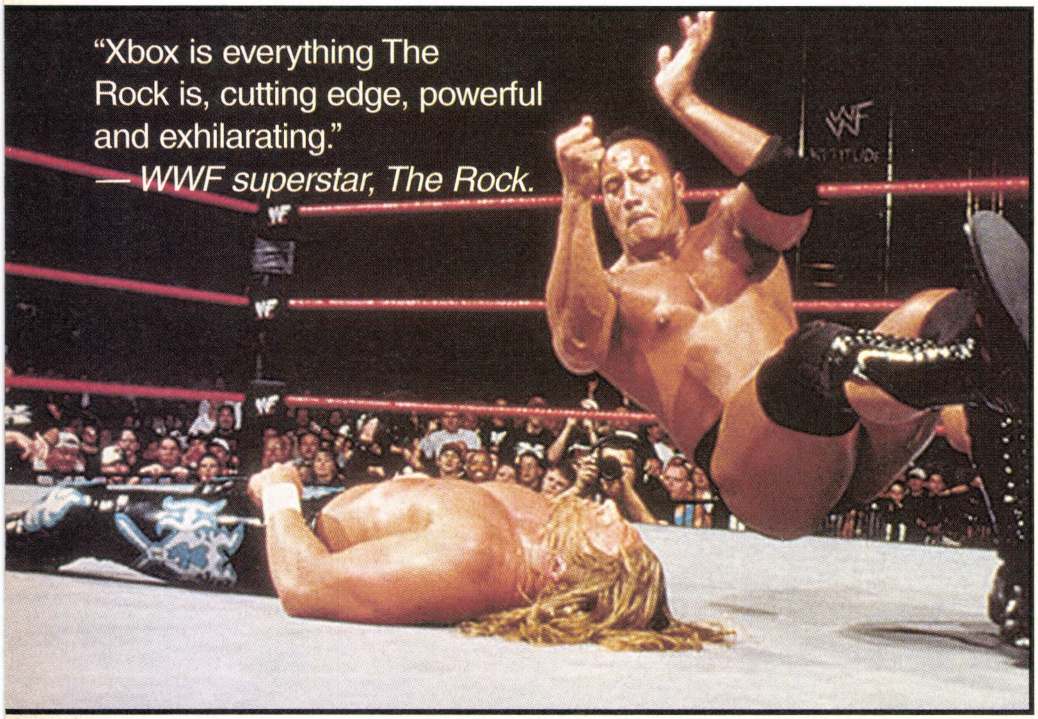
Oddworld publisher Infogrames initially planned to release Munch's Oddysee for Sony's PlayStation 2 but reportedly pulled the plug on the game nine months into its development because of the machine's inability to handle the game's visual detail.

That's when Microsoft stepped in and snatched up the exclusive publishing rights for all future Oddworld games. Within two weeks, developers had Munch's Oddysee up and running on Xbox — and it only tapped about one-fifth of the machine's power!

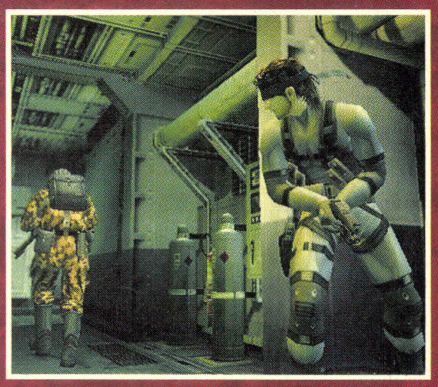
Argonaut Games' Malice looks equally promising. It stars an anime-inspired young girl who must do battle with a fearsome fire god. In addition to challenging 3-D gameplay, the game boasts some Hollywood-calibre special effects. The main characters morphs into a variety of powerful evolutions, ultimately becoming a magical cat-goddess. What's more, environments are set on fire, flooded, torn apart and turned upside down as the game progresses.

So madcap aliens and cheeky cat-goddesses aren't your thing? Fear not — Xbox adaptations of Konami's **Metal Gear Solid**, Activision's **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater** and THQ's **WWF Raw is War** are also on the way.

Unfortunately, the two things we still don't know are Xbox's suggested price and exact release date; however, the company has promised to release the system some time this fall. ■




**Coming soon to Xbox: Konami's Metal Gear Solid X**



**Madden NFL 2002**



## More expected (but not confirmed) games:

- Black & White (Lionhead Studios)
- Crash Bandicoot X (Konami)
- Crimson Skies (Microsoft)
- Dragon's Lair 3D (Dragonstone)
- Halo (Microsoft)
- Unnamed Harry Potter game (Electronic Arts)
- Jurassic Park X (Konami)
- Kessen 3 (Koei)
- Knockout Kings 2002 (Electronic Arts)
- Madden NFL 2002 (Electronic Arts)
- MechWarrior X (Microsoft)
- Silent Hill X (Konami)
- Soldier of Fortune (Majesco)
- SSX (Electronic Arts)
- Tetris World (THQ)
- The Sims (Electronic Arts)

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# Game Bo Advance

## Nintendo's next-gen handheld rocks Japan

**By Gary Mollohan**

*March 21 saw the Japanese release of Nintendo's next-generation Game Boy, called (imaginatively enough) Game Boy Advance. Available in three colors (purple, white and translucent blue), the device retails for 9,800 yen (about 80 bucks).*

*On the same day, the company released a number of peripherals designed for use with the system, including a link cable, battery pack and A/C adaptor.*

*Nintendo says it hopes to sell 24 million Game Boy Advances worldwide in its first year of availability. This is a bold yet attainable number, given the success of the original Game Boy, which has sold almost 110 million units worldwide, making it the most successful video-game system in history.*

*Game Boy Advance is scheduled to arrive in the U.S. on June 11. A suggested retail price has yet to be announced.*

**Game Boy Advance will be able to connect to Nintendo's forthcoming home video-game console, GameCube, to swap data or to act as a rudimentary controller.**

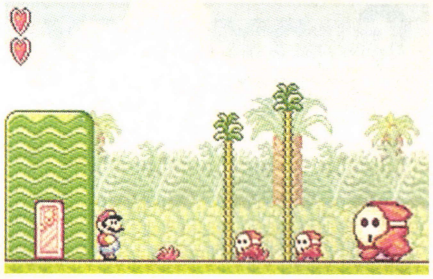


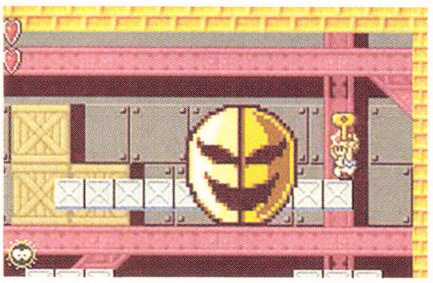


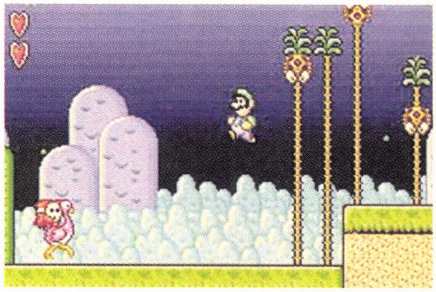


Nintendo's Game Boy Advance







Mario Advance



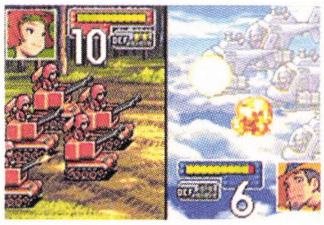




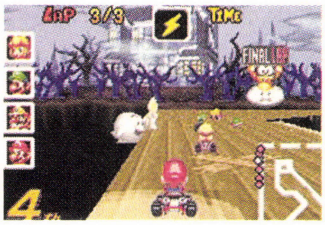



F-Zero for Game Boy Advance

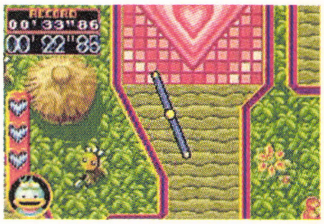
# Game Boy Advances



Game Boy Wars Advance



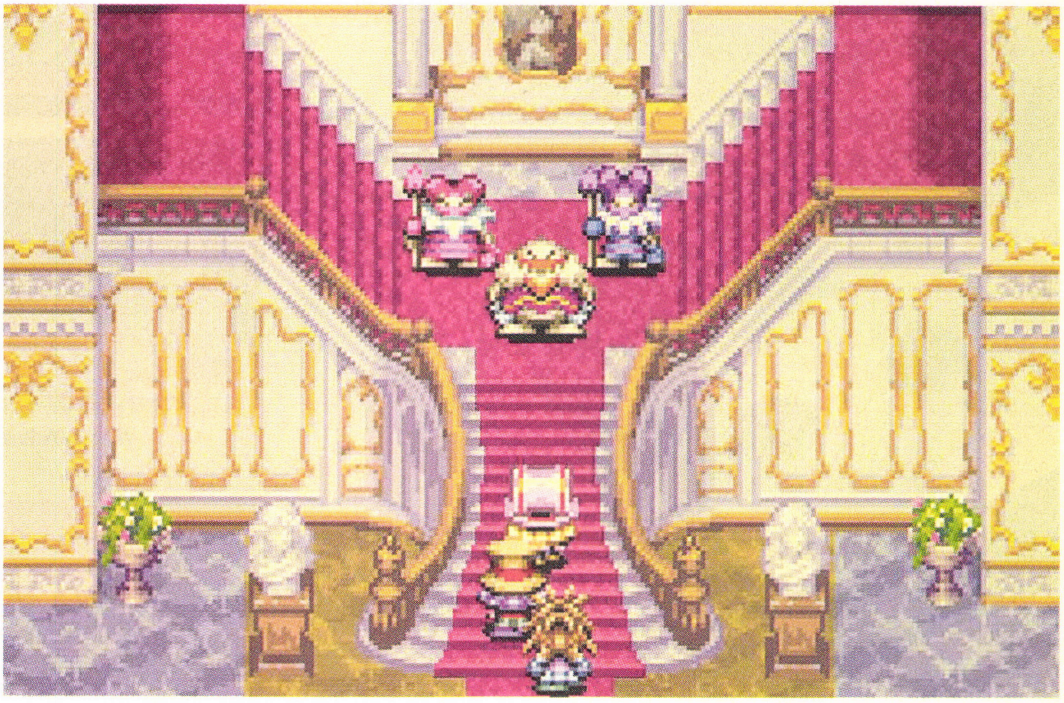
Mario Kart Advance



Kuru Kuru Kuru Rin (Annoying Stick)



Fire Emblem — Dark Shrine Maiden



Magical Vacation

## The Hardware

Game Boy Advance is powered by a 32-Bit processor (about as powerful as the original PlayStation) and boasts a screen that's about 1.5 times larger than Game Boy Color's. While the currrent Game Boy is a vertically aligned system with the screen at the top, Game Boy Advance is played horizontally, much like Sega's now-defunct Game Gear or SNK's NeoGeo Pocket Color.

The sytem's housing also sports a couple of extra buttons, the so-called left and right "shoulder" buttons, located at the top of the unit. The buttons are similar to those found on a Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES) controller and offer gamers a finer degree of control than the traditional Game Boy.

Aside from these relatively minor differences, Game Boy and Game Boy Advance look remarkably similar. Their cartridge slots are even exactly the same width. Coincidence, you ask? Nope — much to the delight of Game Boy owners with extensive cartridge libraries (not to mention their parents), the Game Boy Advance is backwards compatible with it famed predecessor, meaning it can play both Game Boy Advance and older Game Boy titles.

On the down side, Game Boy Advance's screen isn't backlit, meaning you can't play it in the dark. The main reason for this is battery life; the device reportedly can operate for approximately 20 hours on 2 AA batteries, comparable to the current Game Boy.

One cool new feature: Up to four Game Boy Advances can be "daisy-chained," or linked, together — without a special hub peripheral. What's more, you only need one copy of the game, instead of one for each player.

The Game Boy Advance will also link with Nintendo's forthcoming home video-game console, GameCube, allowing it to swap data with the console or to act as a rudimentary controller. Since Game Boy Advance has its own screen, this would allow sports gamers to call plays with greater secrecy, similar to the Sega Dreamcast's visual memory units (VMUs)

## The Games

Virtually every major third-party software publisher has signed on to create Game Boy Advance games; however, it's Nintendo promised Game Boy Advance updates of it's Mario Bros., Mario Kart and F-Zero franchises that have gamers truly salivating.

**Mario Advance** is said to be a graphically enhanced version of the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) game known as Super Mario Bros. 2 in the U.S. In this game, Mario; his brother, Luigi; Princess Toadstool and Toad did battle with a host of bizarre enemies, most often by uprooting vegetables and throwing them at them, instead of using the traditional "butt-bounce" attacks.

Character selection was more than a matter of personal preference, as each character had his or her own strengths and weaknesses. The diminutive Toad, for instance, could carry heavy objects, while Luigi could perform double jumps.

**Mario Kart Advance** and **F-Zero Advance** are essentially portable updates of their famed SNES and N64 predecessors. Although Game Boy Advance is capable of rudimentary 3-D graphics, expect both games to look much more like the earlier SNES games than their N64 cousins.

In a surpise move, long-time Nintendo rival Sega will also be making Game Boy Advance games as a part of its recently announced multi-platform software publishing strategy. The company's first GBA game will be **Sonic Advance**, said to be a graphically enhanced version of the original Sonic the Hedgehog game for the Sega Genisis.

If the brand-new tag team of Mario and Sonic isn't enough to get your juices flowing, here's a list of every GBA game known to be in development. (Note: Many of these games are intended for the Japanese market only and probably won't be released in the U.S.)

## Nintendo Games:



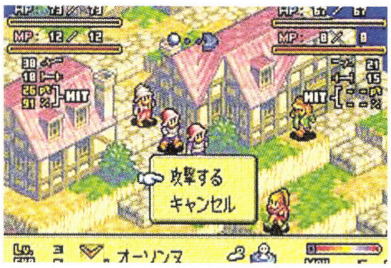

***Baketsu Daisakusen (Horse Racing)***
***F-Zero for Game Boy Advance***
***Fire Emblem — Dark Shrine Maiden***
***Game Boy Wars Advance***
***Hanasaki Gassen (Flower Blooming Competition)***
***Kuru Kuru Kuru Rin (Annoying Stick)***
***Magical Vacation***
***Wario Land 4***
***Mario Kart Advance***




***Napoleon***



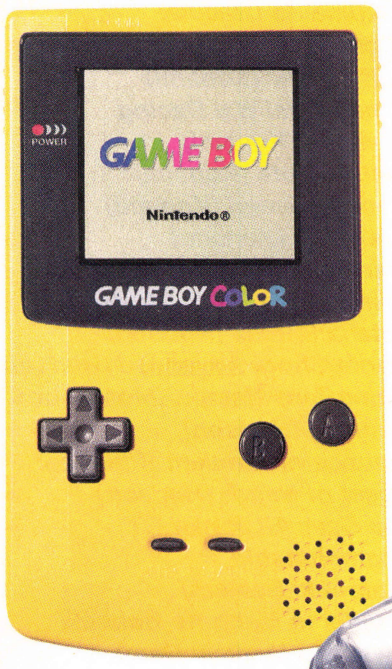
***Ougon no Taiyo (Golden Sun)***




***Tactics Ogre Gaiden***

## Licensee Games:

***Aukuma Jo Dracula: Circle of Moon (Konami)***
***Golf Master (Konami)***
***Konami Wai Wai Racing Advance (Konami)***
***Mail de Cute (Konami)***
***Monster Breed (Konami)***
***Silent Hill (Konami)***
***Star Communicator (Konami)***
***Bomberman Story (Hudson)***
***Hatena Satena (Hudson)***
***Morita Shogi Advanced (Hudson)***
***Momo Taro Matsuri (Momo Taro Festival) (Hudson)***
***Pinobee no Bouken (Pinobee: Quest of Heart) (Hudson)***
***Top Gear All Japan GT Championship (Kotobuki System)***
***Touidei to Maho no Houseki (Tweety's Magical Gem) (Kotobuki System)***
***Minna to Ishyo! (MTO)***
***Pocket GT Advance (MTO)***
***Advanced Fire Pro Wrestling (Spike)***
***Sansara Naga (Victor Interactive Software)***
***Super Block Bus 4 Advance (Starfish)***
***Digi-Communication (Media Works)***
***Dokapon (Asmik Ace Entertainment)***
***Doraemon (Asmik Ace Entertainment)***
***Hello Kitty Miracle Collection (Imagineer)***
***Reiji Matsumoto's Space Hexcite X (Jordan)***
***Rockman EXE (Capcom)***
***Boku ha Kouku Kanseikan (I'm an Air Traffic Controller) (Tamu)***
***Mugen Kikou Zero Tours (Unlimited Mystery Zero Tours) (Media Ring)***
***Winning Post (Horse Racing) (KOEI)***
***Power Rangers Time Force (THQ)***
***Rocket Power (THQ)***
***Rugrats (THQ)***
***Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase (THQ)***
***Spongebob Squarepants (THQ)***
***Tetris (THQ)***
***Wild Thornberrys (THQ)***
***WWF (THQ)*** →




Game Boy Color




Game Boy Printer




Game Boy Camera



N64 Transfer Pak

## Game Boy's Decade of Dominance

*1989 — Nintendo releases the original Game Boy.*

*1994 — Nintendo releases the Super Game Boy adapter for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System, allowing fans to play all Game Boy games in color on their TV screen.*

*1995 — Nintendo releases the Play It Loud Game Boy series with black, red, green, yellow and clear color casings.*

*1996 — Nintendo releases the sleek Game Boy Pocket, which is 30 percent smaller and has a new liquid crystal display for improved clarity.*

*1997 — The Play It Loud colors hit the Game Boy Pocket.*

*1998 — Nintendo releases the highly anticipated Game Boy Color, which allows Game Boy games to be played in full color for the first time ever. That same year, Game Boy fans also see the introduction of Game Boy Camera and Game Boy Printer, as well as the cultural phenomenon known as Pokémon.*

*1999 — Nintendo unveils a new line of Game Boy Color casings in Grape, Atomic Purple, Berry, Kiwi, Dandelion and Teal. The limited-edition Game Boy Color hardware bundle for the Pokémon Yellow Version: Special Pikachu Edition sells more than 3.8 million units in less than six months.*

*2000 — The N64 Transfer Pak, packaged with Pokémon Stadium for the Nintendo 64, allows players to transfer their captured Pokémon from the Game Boy games directly to the N64.*

*2001 — In March, Nintendo releases the highly anticipated Game Boy Advance in Japan.* ■

SPECIAL: 515 Character Bios

# PoJo's Dragon Ball 2001

POJO'S PICKS TOP 10 TRUNKS CARDS

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- [illegible]
- P[illegible]
- [illegible] Prod[illegible]

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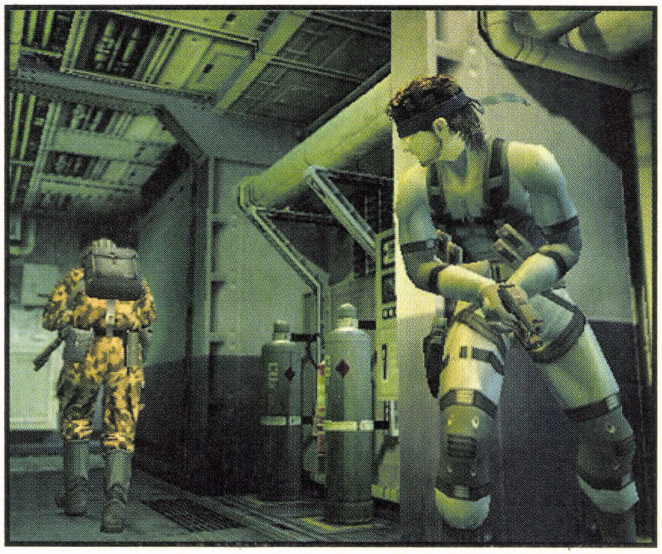
Fight Guide

# Coming Soon

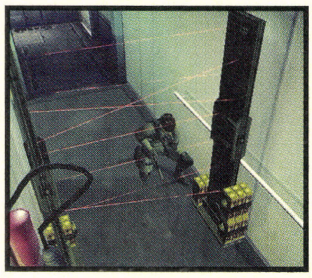
## Metal Gear Solid 2

**Publisher:** Konami
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** TBD

**Description:** Stealthmeister Solid Snake returns in the year's most anticipated sequel. Expect high production values, a movie-calibre script and more pyrotechnics than the Fourth of July in this one. One question: Where's Snake gonna hide his smokes this time? ■







## Silent Hill 2

**Publisher:** Konami
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** TBD

**Description:** The original Silent Hill gave Resident Evil a run for its money in terms of pure creepiness, and this PS2 sequel should raise the bar even higher. This time, the fog is for atmosphere rather than to mask the PS One's shortcomings. ■



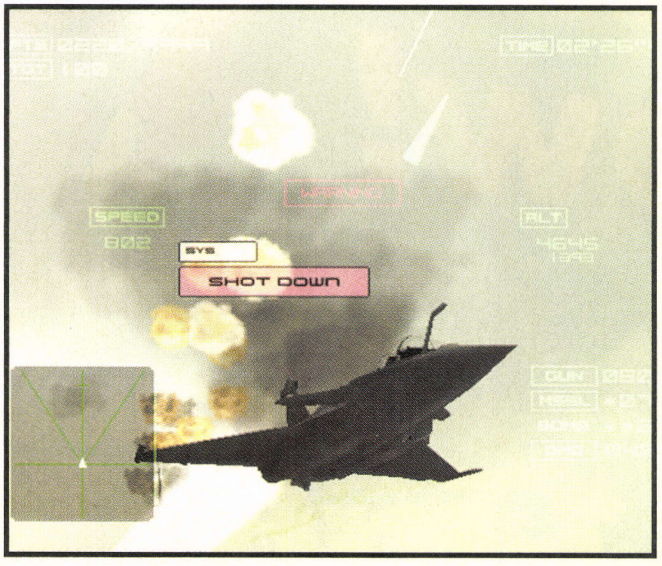


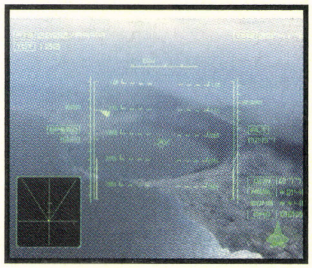


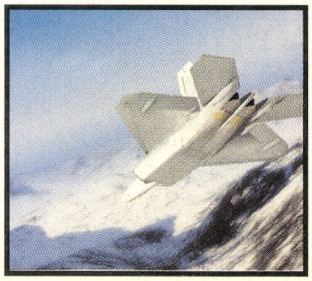
## Ace Combat 4

**Publisher:** Namco
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** TBD

**Description:** The number-one air combat series soars onto PS2. Look for 24 intense missions, jet fighters rendered from actual aircraft and realistic flight physics in this one. And just feast your eyes on these screenshots — the horizon just keeps on going and going. ■



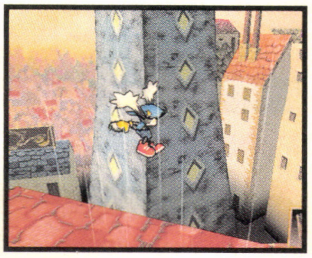


## Klonoa 2: Lunatea's Veil

**Publisher:** Namco
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** July

**Description:** The original Klonoa enthralled gamers with its blend of 3-D graphics and traditional platform action. This PlayStation 2 sequel adds cel-shaded graphics, similar to those found in Sega's Jet Grind Radio, which make the game resemble a living cartoon. ■





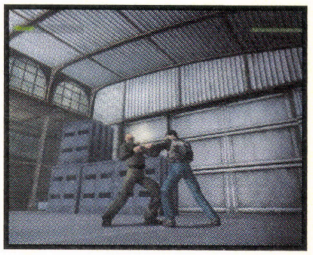


## Dead To Rights

**Publisher:** Namco
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** TBA

**Description:** A cop framed for murder and facing execution makes a daring escape and seeks revenge on those who killed his father and set him up. Gameplay looks similar to SCEA's Syphon Filter, only with John Woo-style cinematics. ■



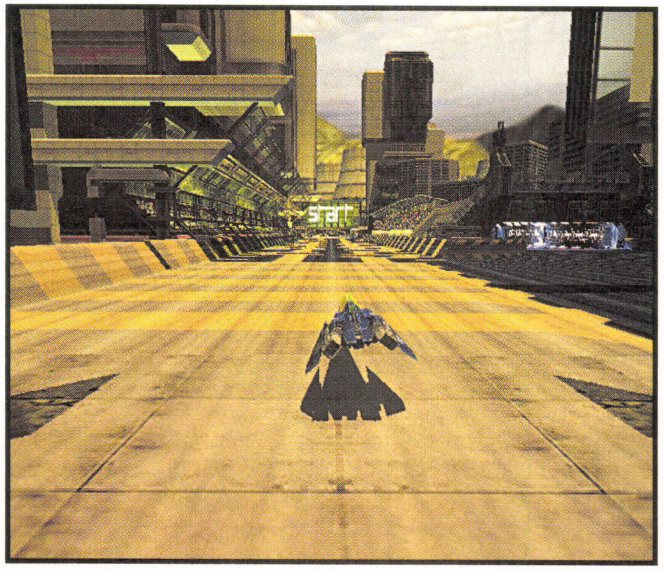




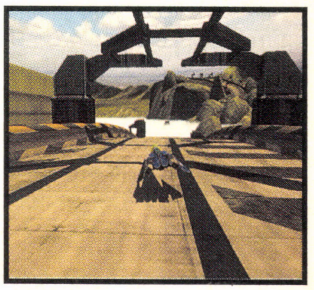
## WipeOut Fusion

**Publisher:** SCEA
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** TBD

**Description:** One of the PS One's original "killer apps" gets a 128-bit facelift, courtesy of Studio Liverpool, makers of the original WipeOut. While the original craft had just seven parameters that defined their handling, these babies have 48 and are capable of true anti-gravity maneuvers. ■







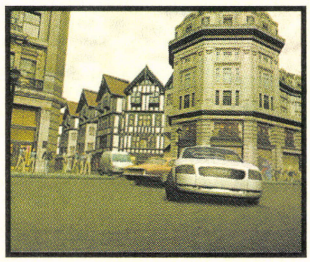
# Coming Soon

## The Getaway

**Publisher:** SCEA
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** TBD

**Description:** Explore 70 square kilometers of London on foot or behind the wheel in this sharp-looking Driver knockoff. Players will be able to perform astounding stunts such as two-wheel races down back alleys, jumps and skids in the game's 50 mean machines. ■







## Test Drive Off Road — Wide Open

**Publisher:** Infogrames
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** Summer

**Description:** If you liked the go-anywhere action of Smuggler's Run, you'll love TDOR: Wide Open. The game is packed with licensed vehicles, including AM General's Hummer, and real-world locations like Moab, Utah and Yosemite, Calif. ■





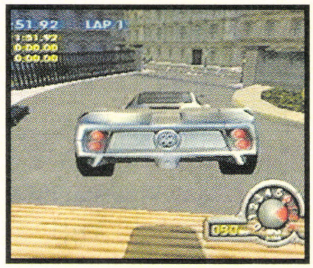


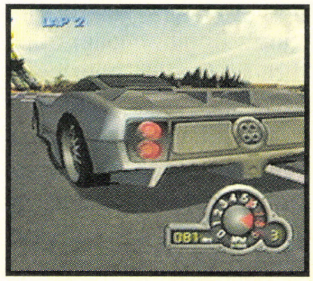

## Supercar Street Challenge

**Publisher:** Activision
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** Summer

**Description:** This ambitious racing game lets you design, build and race your own supercar through 16 courses set in seven city environments, including Monaco, Rome and Los Angeles. But will it have the gas to make all the other excellent PS2 racers eat its dust? ■



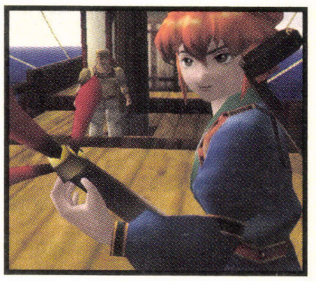
## Ephemeral Fantasia

**Publisher:** Konami
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** June

**Description:** A musician, Mouse, and his talking guitar, Pachimo, are caught in an infinite time warp. It's up to Mouse to live the same five days over and over again in order to stop a mysterious evil. Make allies and gather info to get out of the warp and save the day. ■





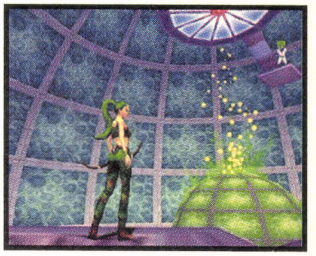



## Portal Runner

**Publisher:** 3DO
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** Spring

**Description:** Follow the adventures of Vikki and her pet lion through four worlds of carnivorous dinosaurs, aliens and a fire breathing dragon. Solve puzzles and make trick shots with your bow and arrow that would make even Robin Hood drool with envy.■



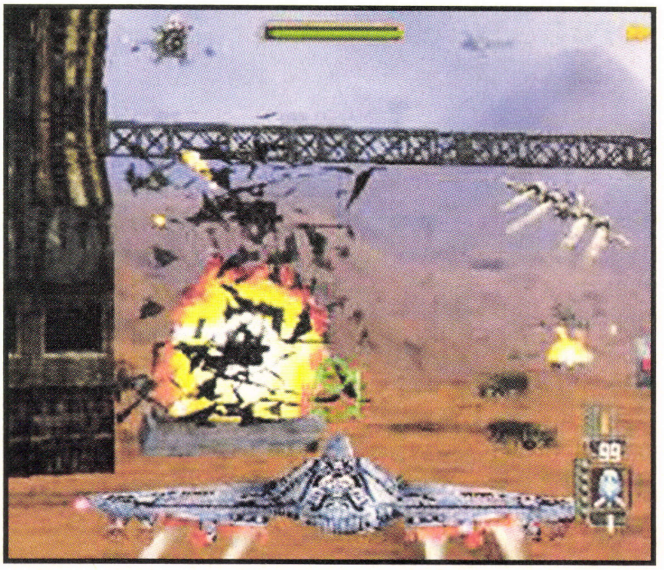




## WDL: WarJetz

**Publisher:** 3DO
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** Spring

**Description:** World Destruction League: WarJetz, pits the best fighter jockeys in the world against each other in 32 different game levels. Blast through mountains, hide behind famous landmarks, and destroy everything in your path in order to win the WDL title. This also includes bombing your pals into submission. ■







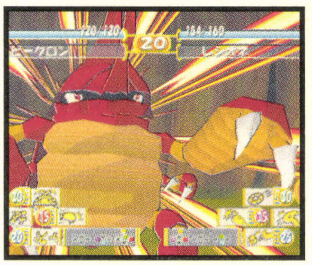
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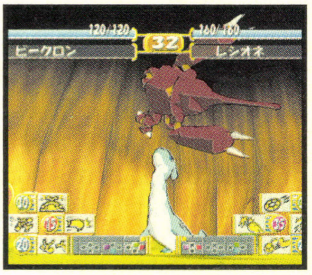
## Monster Rancher 3

**Publisher:** Tecmo
**System:** PlayStation 2
**Availability:** Summer

**Description:** Monster breeding makes the leap to PlayStation 2. In addition to a new cel-shaded look, the game has a number of gameplay enhancements, including heart crystals, which are left behind whenever a monster dies and can be absorbed by surviving monsters. ■



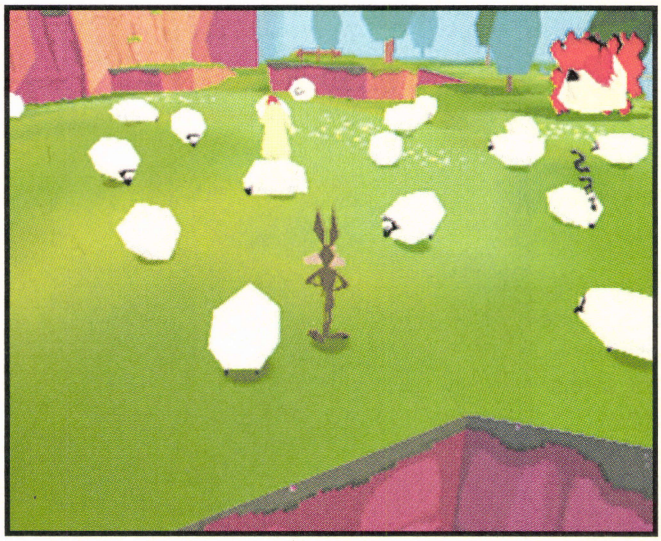





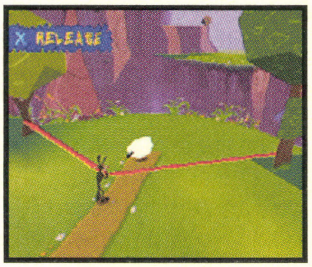
## Looney Tunes Sheep Raider

**Publisher:** Infogrames
**System:** PlayStation
**Availability:** June

**Description:** As Looney Tunes cult favorite Ralph Wolf, players must use devious tactics in order to rustle sheep away from Sam Sheep-dog. Combine and use over 30 ACME gadgets like sheep costumes, rockets, catapults and many more. ■







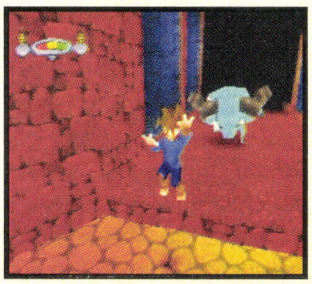
## Monster Force

**Publisher:** Konami
**System:** PlayStation
**Availability:** March

**Description:** Play as kid versions of Universal Studios' classic movie monsters Frankenstein, Dracula and The Wolf Man in this action/adventure game. Frank and his crew must battle a host of creatures, solve puzzles and find the ingredients to counter an evil witch's spell and save the land. ■





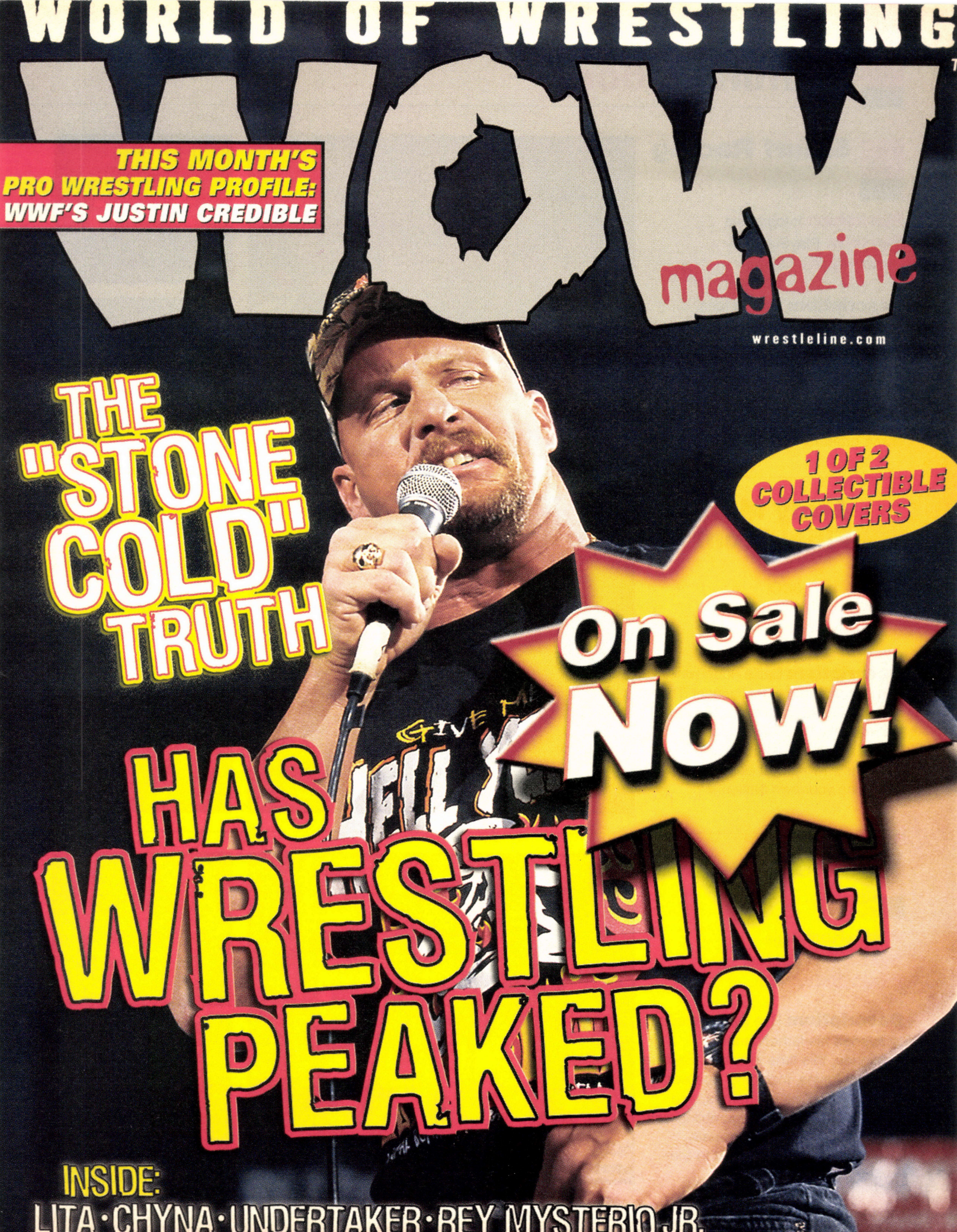


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INSIDE:
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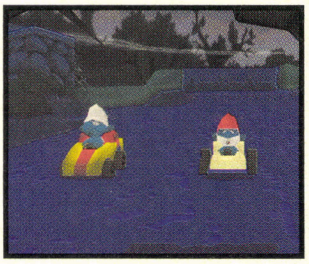
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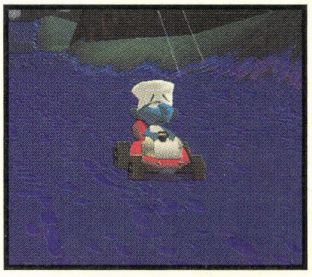
## Smurf Racing

**Publisher:** Infogrames
**System:** PlayStation
**Availability:** March

**Description:** Racing fans, Smurf your engines! Assume the role of one of eight playable characters — including Pappa Smurf, Hefty Smurf and Smurfette — in this light-hearted kart-racing game. An easy mode makes this game great for first-time racers. ■



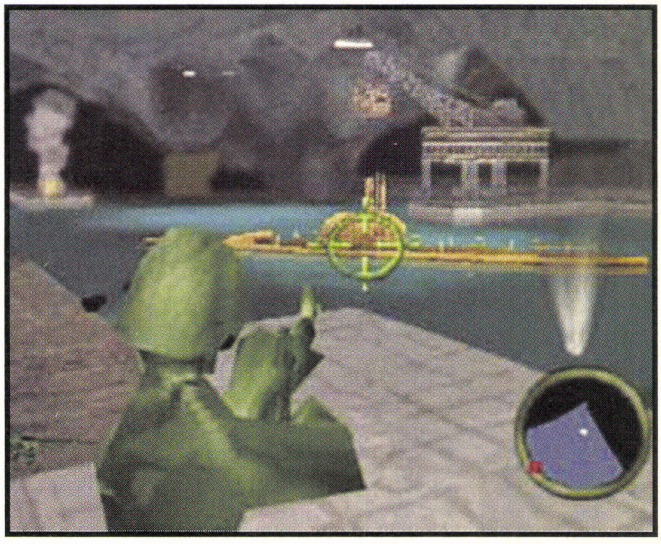


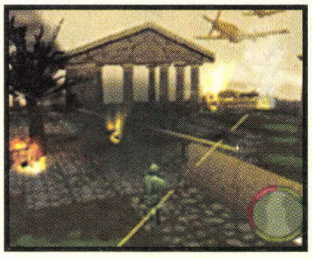


## Army Men: Final Front

**Publisher:** 3DO
**System:** PlayStation
**Availability:** Spring

**Description:** Battle underwater and underground in this sequel. The game also has new combat control features, like drive-and-fire capability from a range of assault vehicles, and a new two-player editor for designing your own battles. ■







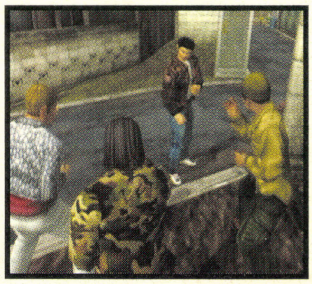
## Shenmue 2

**Publisher:** Sega
**System:** Dreamcast
**Availability:** Fall

**Description:** Ryo Hazuki's quest to avenge his father's murder continues, this time in China. Explore four real towns, including Aberdeen, known for its floating homes, and Kowloon, a dangerous gambling den. Ryo will also meet new female characters, who hold a key to the mystery. ■





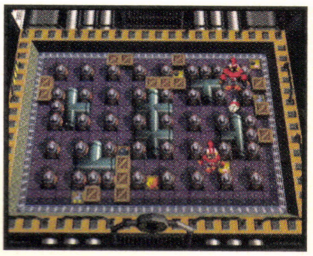



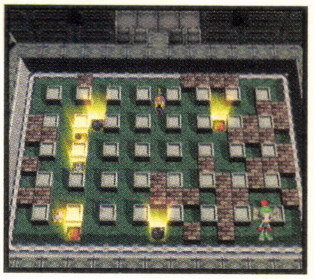
## Bomberman Online

**Publisher:** Sega
**System:** Dreamcast
**Availability:** Spring

**Description:** Get ready for the ultimate online party game! Destroy your opponents by strategically planting bombs and running for cover. The game also includes five exclusive Dreamcast stages, four new gameplay modes and a new create-a-character feature. ■





## Alienfront Online

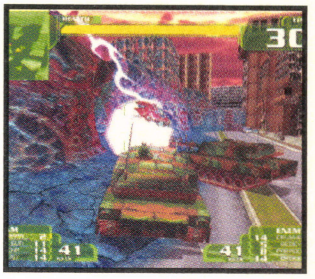
**Publisher:** Sega
**System:** Dreamcast
**Availability:** May

**Description:** Accoring to Sega Alienfront Online will let home gamers compete against their arcade counterparts in intense four-on-four combat. Play as the alien or Earth forces while trash-talking in real time via the "Seaman" mic. ■





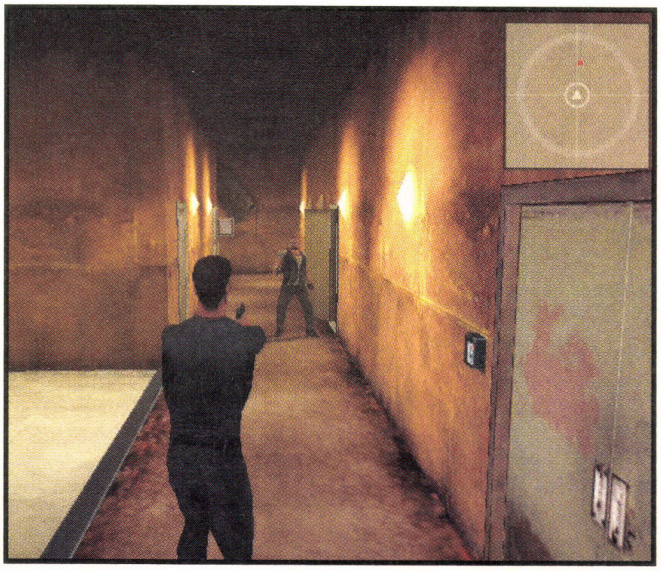


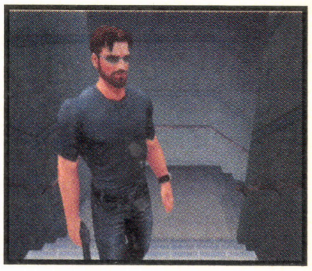


## Headhunter

**Publisher:** Sega
**System:** Dreamcast
**Availability:** TBD

**Description:** Assume the role of a bounty hunter in this action-adventure/racing game. In the game's network mode, players will be able to race up to seven opponents in a futuristic arena. Another cool feature lets you use your VMU as your personal beeper for messages, hints and cheats. ■





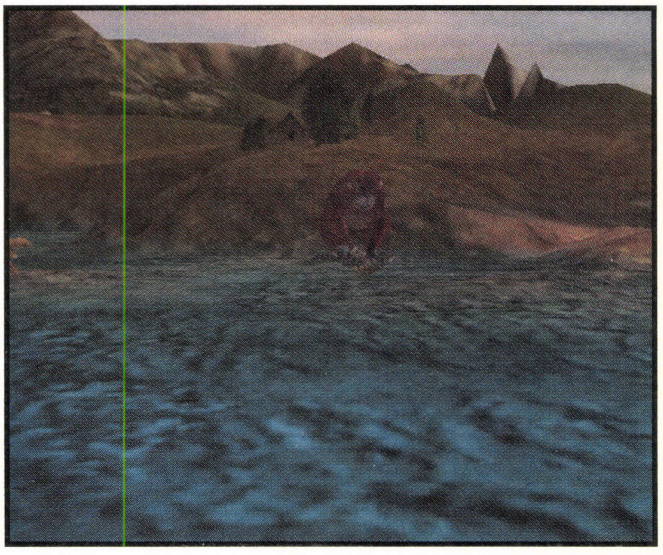


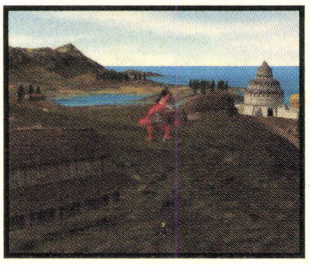
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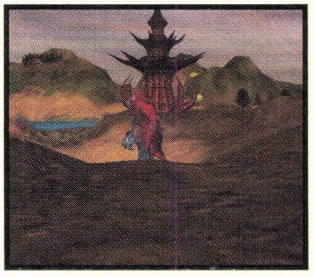
## Black and White

**Publisher:** Sega
**System:** Dreamcast
**Availability:** TBD

**Description:** Black and White is a new "god" sim from the maker of Populous. Players protect or punish their tribe in the form of a giant magical creature, such as a bear, lion or tiger. You can also control the weather or wage war against rival gods. ■



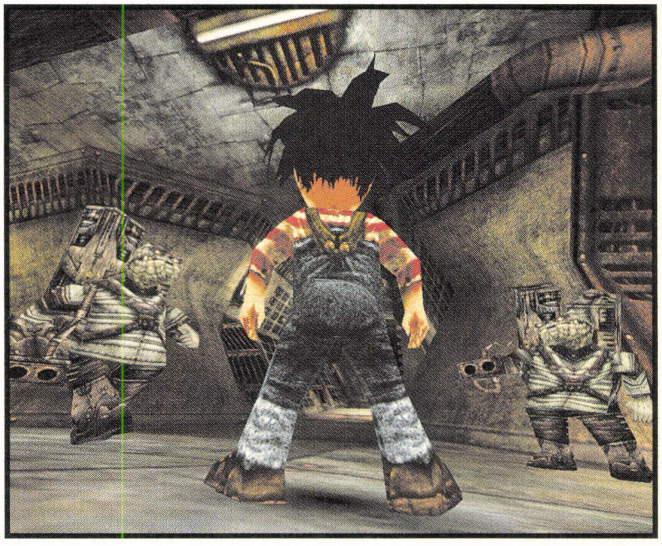


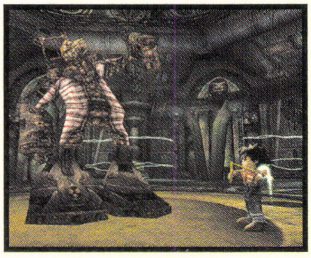


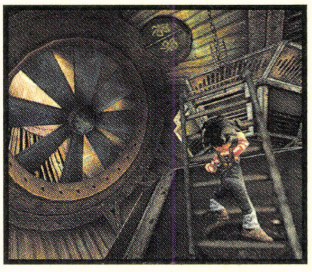
## Evil Twin

**Publisher:** Ubi Soft
**System:** Dreamcast
**Availability:** March

**Description:** In Evil Twin, you play as a young orphan obsessed with superheroes who finds himself thrust into a strange new universe. Originally designed as a cartoon, the game is said to have a deeper than usual story. ■





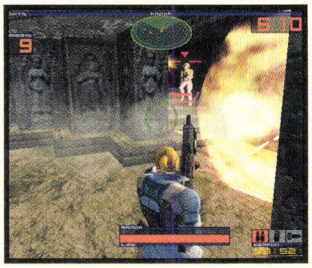


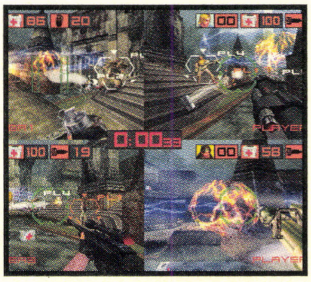
## Outrigger

**Publisher:** Sega
**System:** Dreamcast
**Availability:** March

**Description:** Battle up to three friends in on- or off-line deathmatches in Japan's answer to Quake. Levels include castle ruins, observatories and abandoned train stations, while weapons include flamethrowers and rocket launchers. Like Quake, Outrigger will utilize the Dreamcast mouse and keyboard. ■



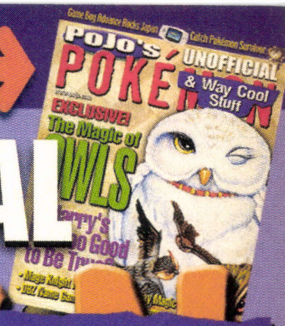




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# Phantasy Star Online Adventuring Guide

*PoJo's* unlocks the deepest secrets of today's hottest online role-playing game

**By Shane Bettenhausen and Christian Nutt**

*Recently Sega unleashed Phantasy Star Online, the first fully networked, console-based role-playing game. As predicted, it became an instant smash. Thousands of would-be adventurers from around the world flood SegaNet's servers at all hours of the day and night, and rare items from the game are auctioned for real money on Internet auction sites.*

*Of course, another publisher released the obligatory official PSO strategy guide, filled with the usual walk-throughs and item lists; however, as its authors openly admitted, there was a whole bunch of stuff they were barred from revealing.*

*Well, after hundreds of hours on online and offline adventuring, PoJo's gives you those secrets — and they won't even cost you $14.99.* →

# Phantasy Star Online Adventuring Guide



Home to such creatures as Boomas and Rag Rappies, the Forest is the first stop on your adventure.

## The Dungeons of PSO

PSO's four dungeons are as deadly as they are beautiful. As you progress through the game, there are many things you should keep in mind; weapons and strategies that work well in one arena may not be appropriate for another. These descriptions should aid you in your quest to discover the mysteries of Ragol and learn the true fate of Pioneer 1's famous hunter and scientist Red Ring Rico.

## The Forest

The lush greenery of Ragol greets you in this, the first dungeon. As you explore the interconnected chambers

## Special Enemy Weapons

Much of the game's most-valuable equipment comes from unlikely sources – the corpses of slain enemies. Although it happens quite rarely, a defeated enemy may drop a piece of its body that can be crafted into a spectacularly cool weapon.

Since you can't just wield a dismembered arm, you'll have to take the loose body part to a skilled professional. After helping Doctor Montague by completing the "Doc's Secret Plan" Hunter's Guild quest, the good doctor will appear in town during other quests like "Unsealed Door." Simply talk to him, and he'll craft your bloody monster arm into a great new piece of equipment — free of charge!

In the Mine, you'll face legions of annoying Sinow Beats, agile robots capable of inflicting massive damage with a flurry of dagger slashes. If you're lucky, those stylish blades can be yours! Sinow Beat may drop a grisly item named S. Beat Arms, and if you take these mangled arms to Dr. Montague, the S. Beat Blades are yours. With these fashionable pink daggers, you'll be slashing and trashing like a Sinow Beat.

The Ruins are a veritable treasure trove of enemy items, as Delsabers, Chaos Bringers and Chaos Sorcerers can all drop special body parts.

You've probably been tormented by insidious Delsabers on numerous occasions, so it's time to strike back by transforming their corpses into useful equipment. Defeated Delsabers might drop a Right Arm or a Left Arm. The Right Arm can be crafted into Delsaber's Buster, a powerful, strange-looking saber that characters of any class can wield. The Left Arm becomes Delsaber's Shield, a barrier with exceptional defense. If you equip both of these items simultaneously, the effectiveness of both the sword and shield are enhanced.

Chaos Bringers are the powerful centaurs that roam the Ruins. These guys are incredibly dangerous and fairly rare, so the probability of snatching a body part from their corpses is slim. If you're exceedingly lucky, you may come home with C-Bringer's Right Arm, which the doc will change into C-Bringer's Rifle, a bizarre gun that is unlike anything else in PSO.

The spell-slinging Chaos Sorcerers can also drop their precious bounty, a right arm that can be made into C. Sorcerer's Cane. This impressive wand is one of the best weapons for a Force, so this weapon is particularly sought-after.

you'll meet enemies such as the Booma species: Booma, Gobooma, and Gigobooma. These guys have an uncanny resemblance to hamsters and are about as threatening.

You'll also fight Rag Rappies, which look like huge, mutant, baby chicks. Barbarous and Savage Wolves are more threatening but are even more easily dispatched. These mutated creatures are capable of casting Shifta and Deband on themselves if you let them live too long.

Monest, a huge plant, bears no direct threat but is a breeding ground for large mutant mosquitoes known as Mothmants.

Hildebear is the real threat in Forest. This large, powerful beast can punch for a lot of damage, so be careful and strike from afar.

As you traverse the dungeon you'll notice many inroads made by Pioneer 1 into colonizing the planet's surface. Walls are everywhere, and you'll often have to defeat all of the monsters to pass through the gates. As you draw near the end of the dungeon you'll find Pioneer 1's central dome, which has become the home of the fearsome Dragon. You can't get in the busted front doors, but there's a handy teleporter just past them.

No matter which difficulty level you're exploring, the Forest should present few problems unless your levels are low. Rangers and Hunters, especially, have little to fear in their first foray into the wilderness of Ragol.

Most monsters will present little challenge, although Forces should be very careful until they get a few levels. Much treasure is hidden behind fences. Fortunately, the switches which deactivate the force fields are generally quite close.

Though the Forest changes slightly from game to game, there's often a switch placed on the central dome's terrace which deactivates a fence below, so if you want that treasure you'll have to backtrack. There's also a teleporter up there to a hidden alcove that usually contains some goodies.

While you're in the Forest keep your eyes out for some variant enemies. The extremely rare Al Rappy and Hildeblue take the place of their similarly named cohorts but are blue. These enemies often drop rare items, so make sure to stake them out if they appear. Bear in mind that the Rappy species never drops its loot when it first collapses. They'll lie still for awhile before getting up and running away. If you smack them as they flee, they'll invariably drop an item or Meseta.

### Forest Boss: The Dragon

The Dragon is simple on any difficulty level. The most obvious advice is: don't let him face you. If he does, he can breathe fire on you, and you're a goner.

Rangers should aim for his head, and forces should cast a Barta-series spell. Hunters can strike his feet on Easy, but Hard and V-Hard ➜

Don't be too discouraged if you haven't found any of these items. All of these pieces are unbelievably rare, so you may play for hundreds of hours and never encounter any of them. Your chances of obtaining them are higher on Very Hard, but you can find enemy weapons on Hard and Normal difficulties.

## Quest Weapons

### Aunt Akiko's Frying Pan

This obscure piece of kitchenware might not inspire fear in your enemies, but it may get a few laughs from your comrades. Acquiring the pan isn't very difficult, but you must have completed all of the Hunter's Guild quests so that you can replay them in any order.

The first stop on this skillet adventure is the "Secret Delivery" quest. One of the guys in the town will invite you to join his secret weapon society and give you the Weapon Emblem. However, you must seek the approval of four other members, each in a different quest. Now complete the "Secret Delivery" quest before moving on.

Afterwards, complete "Staking a Claim," "The Value of Money," "Gran Squall" and "The Lost Bride" in any order. In each quest, you'll find another member of the weapon group on Pioneer 2, and each person will give you approval. One member will quiz you on the true meaning of weapons, so choose "enthusiasm," not "explosion." You must actually complete all four of these quests, as the approval does not register if you cancel out of the quest.

With your Weapon Emblem and four glowing approvals, return to the "Secret Delivery" and talk to the original member. He'll point you towards the boss of the society, a feisty dame named Akiko. She's hanging out near the shopping district, and if you talk to her, the legendary Frying Pan is yours. The pan performs like a saber with the Soul ability, as its special attack refills your TP gauge. Any class can equip it, and best of all, it makes a satisfying metallic thud when it hits an enemy.

### Kireek's Soul Eater

During the "Battle Training" quest you'll first encounter Kireek, a high-level android carrying a giant scythe. It's a cool and completely unique weapon, and if you're crafty, you can pry it from his grasp. If you plan wisely, all of these quest variables can be completed the first time through on ➜

# Phantasy Star Online Adventuring Guide

gets rid of that luxury, unless you have a powerful weapon such as the Dragon Slayer.

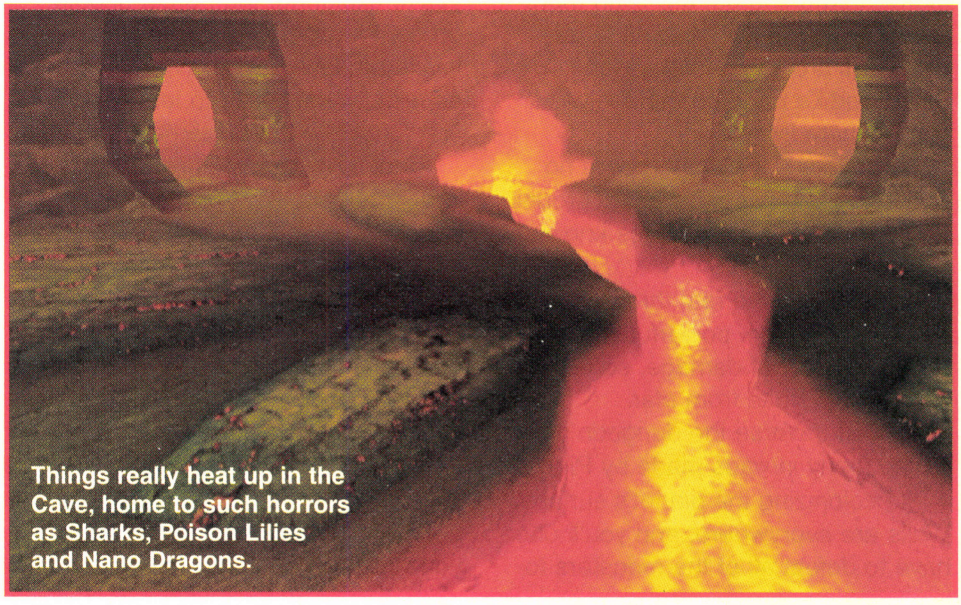
Once he's hit he'll often collapse. When his head is lying on the ground, wail on it as much as possible. At times, he dives into the ground. Make for the edge of the room and run around the perimeter. Between this and paying attention to the radar screen, you won't be hit when he does his Bugs Bunny impression.

Be careful not to stand in the lava, as you can easily die. You should also be careful when he's dying, because he can fall on you and inflict great damage.

## The Cave

The Cave is a much more menacing environment than the relatively soothing Forest. This is the first time you'll get to explore the depths of Ragol. The Cave is the second longest dungeon in the game, and its three sections will take a long time to conquer.

These areas cover a wide variety of aesthetic sensibilities. What is mostly the same across all of them are the enemies you will face. The lava-filled Cave 1 is where you'll first meet the Shark species. You'll quickly be beset by Evil Sharks, which are later joined by Pal Shark and Guil Shark. These



**Things really heat up in the Cave, home to such horrors as Sharks, Poison Lilies and Nano Dragons.**

Normal mode. However, if you screw up along the way, you can try again later on Hard or Very Hard.

At the end of the "Dr. Osto's Research" quest, your companion Sue will ask for your name. This seemingly unimportant question makes all the difference; so if you want that Soul eater, refuse to tell her your name.

You'll next encounter Sue during the "Unsealed Door" quest, where she'll stop and chat for a bit. Complete that quest and move on to the "Waterfall Tears" quest, where you will once again meet Kireek. He's apparently forgotten that time the two of you fought as a team, and now he is trying to kill you! Defeat him here and move on to the "Black Paper" quest. Kireek is looking for a rematch, so once again you must thrash the fool.

The climactic finale occurs during the "From the Depths" quest. After you separate from your comrade, Ash, head back to Ruins 2 and go to the room at the far west. Kireek is waiting in ambush. It's a difficult fight, but any character on level 20 or higher should be able to take him. Finally, you can claim his distinctive weapon. The Soul Eater is yours!

Any class can wield this fearsome scythe, a highly effective weapon with a long reach. It does have one drawback though: It saps your HP. This constant vampiric life drain is slightly annoying, but the rate of depletion is quite slow, so you should be ok.

## Agito

You won't actually find this legendary katana during a Hunter's Guild quest, but you'll need to play a quest to find out if the Agito you found online is the real one. You'll learn about the sword during the "Seek my Master" quest, as you search for the four missing blades of Zoke. You recover three swords during the quest, but the fourth, Agito, remains at large.

If you find an Agito while playing a regular online or offline game, return to the "Seek My Master" quest and have it appraised by the Tekker in the shopping district. False copies of the sword abound, so he'll tell you if yours is legit. Fake Agito swords look rusty, but they are still capable weapons.

Were you lucky enough to find the real Agito? If so, you can have it made into Oritoagito, a beautiful silver katana that is possibly the strongest weapon in Phantasy Star Online. To forge this blade, you'll need a real Agito and the three Books of Katana. These books appear

guys are much like Boomas. Although they're more intimidating in appearance, you have little to fear besides their increased strength.

Poison Lilies, an extremely annoying monster, are prevalent throughout the Caves. Being plants, they're rooted in one place, but they can poison or paralyze you. Nano Dragons are pretty tough, and since they can fly, hunters equipped with melee weapons will have a difficult time killing them. The huge preying mantises known as Grass Assassins pose no real threat, although their special attack can briefly freeze you in one spot.

Pan Arms is the most annoying enemy in the game. This huge beast can only be hurt by magic or powerful attacks. After a while it will split into two halves which are substantially easier to kill. Either way, you'll get piddling experience from this time-waster.

Poufilly Slime, which appears in Cave 2 and 3, is almost as annoying. This enemy can only be hit once it's stopped moving and shown its true form. To top it off, if you attack it with magic or a special attack, it will split and you'll be facing two of them.

Things get a bit more involved in the Caves, compared to the Forest. Cave 1 is pretty straightforward, but for the first time you'll encounter doors locked by sets of four switches. These can only be opened by having one character stand on each switch simultaneously. This can present a problem if your party lacks a fourth member. The good news is that these doors invariably lead to rooms unnecessary to visit to successfully finish the dungeon. The bad news is that these chambers contain treasure. In single-player mode you can hit all the buttons yourself, so play through alone if you want all of the booty.

Cave 2 is a bit trickier, with switches throughout and many different ways to go. In contrast to Cave 1's oppressive lava floes, it has beautiful cascading waterfalls and occasional rainbows, as well as some foliage.

Cave 3 looks much more man-made. You'll see colorful lichens growing on many of its floors. As in any of the sections of Cave, if you want all of the treasure it's going to require scouting out switches and backtracking.

Keep your eyes peeled for Nar Lilly and Pouilly Slime. These rare creatures, like Forest's Al Rappy and Hildeblue, are difficult to find. Unlike their Forest brethren, they appear as red variants instead of blue.

## Cave Boss: De Rol Le

De Rol Le is a strange creature that lives in the canal beneath the Cave. The easiest time to damage him is when he's clamped onto your raft, but that's not the only time. When he's swimming alongside, casting Gizonde or Razonde works wonders. You can also hit him with guns, Swords, or Partisans at this time. ➜

rarely in crates or from monsters, and you'll need all three volumes to make the sword.

## Rare Weapons

Items in PSO are graded on a rarity scale, with a 9-star item being considered legitimately "rare." You won't find any of these weapons on Normal, so you'll have to play on Hard and Very Hard to find this valuable equipment. You'll know that you have something special when you find an item labeled "Special Weapon ??????." Take it to the Tekker and enjoy the spoils of victory!

Note: This is not a complete list of special weapons, as many ultra-rare items have yet to be discovered.

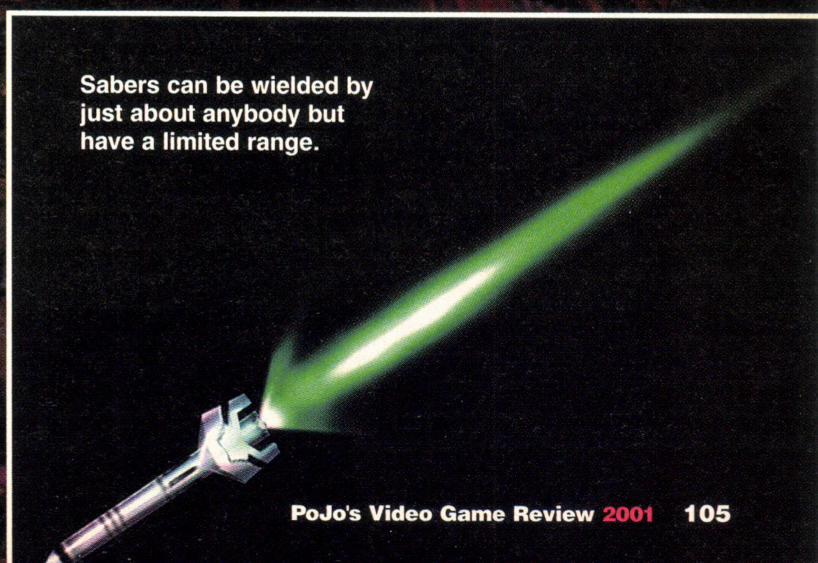
## Sabers

**DB's Saber:** For a "rare weapon" this blade is painfully average and surprisingly plentiful. All classes can wield it, and its special attack uses TP to do double damage.

**Kaladgolg:** Like DB's saber, all characters can use this sword, but unlike DB's, this one is quite good. The special attack freezes enemies.

**Durandal:** This green and yellow blade is the ultimate saber, sporting attack strength of 335. Only Hunters can use it, and the special attack steals EXP from enemies.

**Double Saber:** This stylish green blade is one of the most sought-after weapons in PSO, as everyone wants to smash Rag Rappies Darth Maul-style. Any class can equip a Double Saber, but the ATP requirement is quite high. ➜



**Sabers can be wielded by just about anybody but have a limited range.**

# Phantasy Star Online Adventuring Guide

The pods he releases from his posterior will either attach to the raft or surround one player. In case of the former, run to the back of the raft and they won't harm you. If they surround one of your companions, make sure to help destroy them.

The purple gas he releases is very damaging. It's less likely to hit you at the front of the raft.

When he's clamped to the raft's side, you can avoid his tentacles easily if you start moving as soon as he retracts one. After the next tentacle hits, safely resume pummeling.

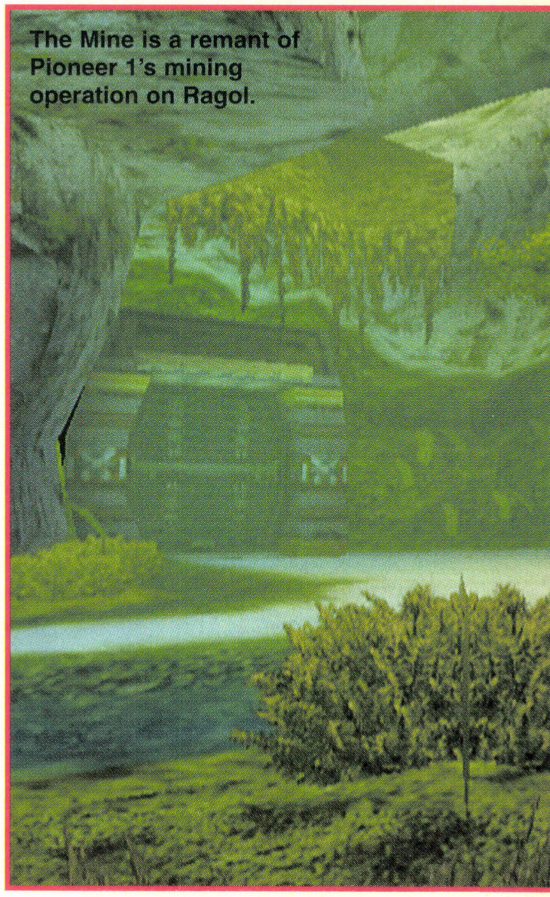
When his face shield breaks off, he's half-dead. If you take too long, he'll fly to the ceiling, shorting out the lights and knocking loose debris. Make sure to avoid the falling rocks — you can tell where they'll land by the shadows.

When he stands erect at the rear of the raft, wait to one side. His beams are easily avoided by waiting for the "woosh" sound and running to the other edge. This is his most damaging attack, so be careful.

## The Mine

If you thought Cave 3 looked refined, wait until you see the Mine. This dungeon is the remnant of Pioneer 1's mining operations on Ragol, and as you investigate this fully active and technological dungeon you'll experience some of the most impressive graphics in the game.

Instead of bashing mutant creatures, you'll be fighting robotic enemies throughout this dungeon. This dungeon can be very annoying for sword-wielding hunters, as many enemies stay well out of range. The



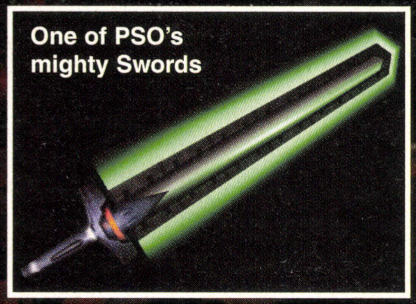
The Mine is a remant of Pioneer 1's mining operation on Ragol.

**Stag Cutlery:** A stronger, pinker version of the Double Saber that's only for Hunters and Rangers. Its special attack causes confusion in enemies.

**Twin Brand:** The ultimate bragging tool for a Hunter, the Twin Brand is the most powerful Double Saber in the game. Unlike the girlishly pink Stag Cutlery, this blade is an acceptable shade of blue.

## Swords

**Flowen's Sword:** This special weapon increases your Luck and has a special attack that steals TP from the enemy, but overall, it is actually weaker than most Calibur swords.



One of PSO's mighty Swords

**Last Survivor:** Another special weapon with mixed blessings; this sword is quite powerful and steals HP with its special attack, yet it has very low accuracy.

**Dragon Slayer:** Far better than the previous two swords, this weapon has great stats and no real weaknesses. You'll often find a Dragon Slayer after defeating the Forest boss on Hard and Very Hard.

**Chain Sawd:** Not only does this chainsaw sword look exceptionally cool, but it also is incredibly powerful. Unlike the other special swords that max out at +9, the Chain Sawd can be ground up to an amazing +40!

## Daggers

**Blade Dance:** This special dagger is fairly common, and it's only marginally better than the average Ripper. The seize attack may paralyze enemies.

**Bloody Art:** Once again, this rare weapon is actually weaker than the Ripper, but it does have the highest accuracy of any dagger. Also, the special attack cuts an enemy's HP by half.

**Cross Scar:** This fairly rare dagger is the most powerful one in the game, and it can perform a lighting attack.



best course of action is often to cast a Technique in the Zonde series, as electricity is both highly damaging and paralysis-inducing to all machines.

The main enemy in this dungeon is known as Gilchic. These humanoid robots are very strong, but are knocked back every time you hit them and are difficult to combo with melee weapons.

Canadines are small floating robots that attack with electricity. They often occur in large groups, surrounding a nearly identical red robot known as Canane. If you kill the Canane, the rest will kamikaze attack you.

Sinow Beat and Sinow Gold are devious robots that attack relentlessly. Sinow Beat can create illusionary duplicates of itself, and Sinow Beat can heal itself and other enemies. You must be careful around these guys, as they're extremely agile and their beatings often result in the Confusion status ailment.

Dubchic looks like a differently colored Gilchic, but is impossible to kill unless you destroy the controlling pod known as Dubwitch.

Garanz is a formidable robot. It's the largest normal enemy in the game and is covered in tons of armor plating. Its missiles do extremely high damage, but in a strange quirk, if you run slow circles around Garanz you can often make it hit itself with its own projectiles.

If you make it through the Cave nothing the Mine throws at you should be much trouble. The new mechanics here really concern the enemies and not the dungeon itself.

The Mine is split into two sections instead of three, so it's a quite a bit shorter than Cave. As you travel throughout make sure to scout all of the rooms off of each large chamber before choosing one; often they'll just be small treasure rooms and you don't want to miss anything.

Switches are often placed much further from the fences they deactivate this time around, so make sure to remember the colors of switches and →

## Partisans

**Brionac:** This special weapon is weaker than the non-rare Gungnir, but it comes pre-loaded with the TP-stealing Soul ability and it looks pretty cool.

**Vjaya:** One of the rarer 9-star weapons in the game, the Vjaya is strong, very accurate and has the oddball Charge ability that uses money to do double damage.

**Gae Bolg:** As the strongest partisan in PSO, this spear also has the highest ATP requirement of any 9-star weapon: a whopping 500. Its special attack freezes enemies.

## Slicers

**Slicer of Assassin:** All classes can equip this elite slicer capable of delivering one-hit kills with its special attack. Nothing is more satisfying than killing an annoying Pan Arms with one meager blow!

**Diska of Liberator:** This is the best slicer that all classes can use. It's strong, accurate and has the ability to confuse enemies.

**Diska of Braveman:** Only Hunters can use this, the most-powerful of all slicers. You'll have to have 495 ATK to use it, but if you're looking for slicin' action, it's your best bet. Its berserk ability uses HP to do double damage.

## Canes

**Club of Laconium:** As the only weapon crafted from Laconium, the powerful ore featured in every Phantasy Star, this cane is one for the old-school PSO player. Its accuracy is tragically low, but it does have a good attack value and a cool flame attack.

**Mace of Adaman:** It suffers from the same accuracy problems as the Club of Laconium, but this mace is far stronger and sports a lightning attack.

**Club of Zumiuran:** This cane is quite rare, and for good reason: It has the highest attack value of the lot and features a neat one-hit kill special attack.

## Rods

**Battle Verge:** Forces with a taste for battle should →

# Phantasy Star Online Adventuring Guide

fences you see as you travel throughout and don't be afraid to backtrack.

There are a couple of dark rooms, a concept that debuted in the Cave. Be careful when looking for the light switch. Typically, the last large chamber before you meet with the boss is extremely difficult. Make sure you're prepared to fight many waves of Gilchics and Canadines, as well as both types of Sinow robots. The coup de grace to this last room is usually two simultaneous Garanzes, which can be highly damaging.

There are no rare enemy variants in this dungeon, so don't worry about keeping your eyes peeled.

## Mine Boss: Vol Opt

You'll be fighting Vol Opt in two phases. During the first, pay attention to the screens on the perimeter of the room. When they're red, attack. Hunters will want a Sword or Partisan. Rangers and Forces can also hit the target in the center of the ceiling.

The pods that come from holes in the floor shoot weak electricity — don't worry about dying here. Make sure to damage the pod that's glowing red. When you do enough damage, the room will shake and explode.

Now the real fun begins: Vol Opt makes his grand entrance. You will often be targeted by a red laser. If so, run. When his side panels unfold, large pillars will crash down and crush you. Make sure your entire party runs the same direction or things could get ugly. You must also be careful of the missiles he shoots from his back.

This boss also has an attack that traps one player in a cage. You can avoid it easily if you pay attention. When his blue front panel glows, run. A small green ball will emerge, and if it catches you, you're dead meat. Fortunately, it will dissipate after a few seconds.

Make sure to use a weapon that can hit multiple targets, because Vol Opt is covered in them.

## The Ruins

This is the real meat and potatoes of PSO. If you plan to raise your character to high levels, expect to spend a lot of time in the Ruins. As this is the last dungeon, it's very involved and is even longer than the Cave.

The enemies here are by far the strongest in the game. The Dimenian species is much like Boomas or Sharks, only much stronger. Delsaber is a very tough enemy. It can jump across entire chambers and its repeated slashes are very strong. It can also protect itself from attacks, so it's tough to kill.

Claws are really pathetic, and easily dispatched. You will encounter ➜

go for this butt-kicking rod. Hefty accuracy, good attack and a useful special attack that cuts enemy HP by half make it worthwhile.

**Brave Hammer:** Strangely, this rod looks absolutely nothing like a hammer. What you do get is a powerful stick with the Spirit ability, which uses TP to do double damage.

**Alive Aqhu:** This strangely named weapon is exceptionally powerful for Force equipment. Its attack score is nearly double that of a Striker, the best non-rare Rod.

## Wands

**Fire Scepter:** Agni: All wands are painfully weak, but they raise your MST stat considerably. This wand is a little better than your average scepter, and it offers a toasty flame attack.




**Ice Staff:** Dagon: Stronger than its fiery counterpart, this ice wand performs a similar elemental attack.

**Storm Wand: Indra:** This wand is almost a real fighting weapon, offering twice the attack power of a normal scepter. It features a steep MST requirement (490) and a lighting strike.

## Special Force Weapons

**Sting Tip:** This wacky cane is incredibly powerful, extremely rare and exceptionally odd. The tip is a rotating cluster of spiky purple gems, and you'll be the envy of Forces worldwide if you carry one of these.

**Technical Crozier:** A crozier is traditionally a bishop's cane, but this one looks more like some piece of modern art. This rare wand is a necessity for Forces on the edge of the fashion world.

**Magical Piece**: Cutesy FOnewearls consider this wand the holy grail of fruity excess. It's a garish weapon: a blue rod with a giant pink heart on each end. When you



Home to the game's strongest enemies, the ruins offer clues about Ragol's original inhabitants.

attack with the Magical Piece, translucent pink hearts fill the battlefield — truly embarrassing.

## Handguns

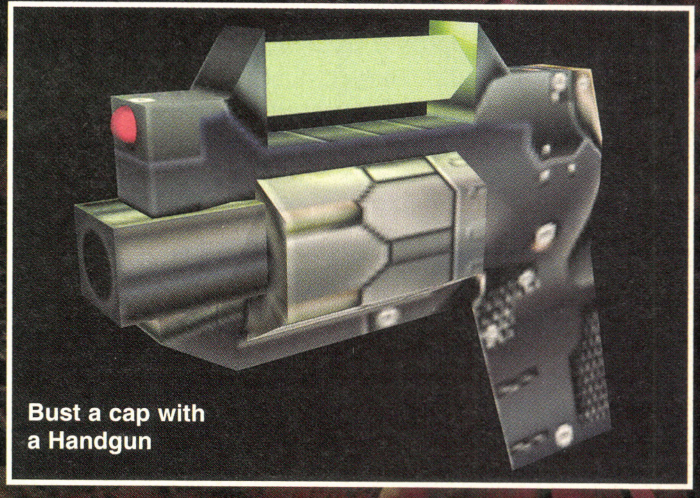
**Varista: A** good handgun is a requisite for all classes – handguns are fast, powerful and easy to combo. Varistas are plentiful, so most high-level characters should have one handy. Special attack may paralyze enemies.

**Custom Ray v.00:** Despite its rarity, this gun is actually weaker than the Varista. However, it is the most-accurate handgun and has a special flame attack.

**Bravace:** This lightning-type gun is super-powerful, but only Rangers can use it. Seeing as how Rangers have more fearsome gun options at their disposal, the Bravace basically goes to waste.

## Rifles

**Visk-235W:** All three special rifles are substantially better than Lasers, the most powerful non-rare guns. The Visk has the useful seize ability that paralyzes foes.



Bust a cap with a Handgun

**Wals-MK2:** Strong, accurate and rare, this rifle has a special attack that confuses enemies. Stand back, and let those crazy monsters kill each other!

**Justy-23ST:** This rare rifle has the weapon greatness trifecta: super-high ATK, superb accuracy and the useful devil attack that cuts an enemy's HP by half. ➜

# Phantasy Star Online Adventuring Guide

an enemy called Bulclaw. If it envelopes a player, it will split into four Claws and an enemy known as Bulk, but it's not a very big deal.

Dark Belra is a huge golem and can attack from long distances, so be careful. He can paralyze you if you get caught between his arms.

Chaos Sorcerer is a floating mage who will attack you with spells. He's flanked by crystals called Bee L and Bee R. They can be destroyed, leaving him helpless. He will teleport around the room to find a vantage point to attack from.

You'll encounter Dark Gunner, an enemy so annoying it almost seems to belong in the Cave. When it's moving, it's impossible to damage.

Chaos Bringer is the most formidable foe you'll face. A huge centaur with a sword, he is capable of both physical and magical attacks. When you enter a room, he'll immediately charge you. This attack can kill weak characters in an instant. Be careful, because he's also likely to steal your magic points.

The Ruins themselves are a technological marvel. If you hadn't figured it out by now, you'll probably deduce that Pioneer 1 didn't contain the first people to set foot on Ragol. These catacombs and dungeons prove that another culture preceded them.

The first floor of the Ruins offers a lot of treasure, and there are many ways to go. It will take a long time to clear it if you have your heart set on getting all of the goodies. This dungeon contains the best treasure in the game, so don't forget to check behind the waterfall for the secret treasure room.

Poisoned rooms make their debut in the Ruins. A switch deactivates the poison clouds. If you play as a Hunter and haven't switched to a Sword or Partisan-class weapon yet, you will want to now since hitting multiple enemies at once is essential. Rabarta is indispensable since it freezes the hordes. Make sure a Force tags along if you're planning a Ruins expedition.

Ruins 2 is a much moodier place than the first floor, suffused in ominous blue light. Ruins 3 has the last of Red Ring Rico's records contained in it, so be sure to read her messages to learn the true fate of Pioneer 1. This floor is very creepy, with pulsating walls and sticky strands of web stuck everywhere. No enemy variations occur in the Ruins, so concentrate on all creatures.

## Ruins Boss: Dark Falz

Dark Falz has dogged the crew of every Phantasy Star game. Of course, he's changed his image a lot since the



## Mechguns

**M&A60 Uzis:** All mechguns have abysmal attack value and accuracy, but the high rate of fire can be useful on bosses. These Uzis feature a berserk attack that allows you to trade HP for a doubly powerful shot.

**H&S25 Justice:** The Justice is better than the Uzi, offering higher attack and accuracy alongside a nifty freeze attack.

**L&K14 Combat:** While any character could use all the previous mechguns, this model is exclusively for Rangers. Highlights include a relatively high attack score, good accuracy and a paralysis function.

## Shots

**Crush Bullet:** Rangers looking for a surefire way to get hefty experience points, take note: One blast from a shot can hit all enemies in a room. The Crush Bullet isn't much better than a standard Arms shot, but it does have a special shot that sucks HP from your foes.

**Meteor Smash:** This handy shot is great for RAmar players, as it fills your TP gauge with its special attack. However, TP-challenged androids should probably look elsewhere.

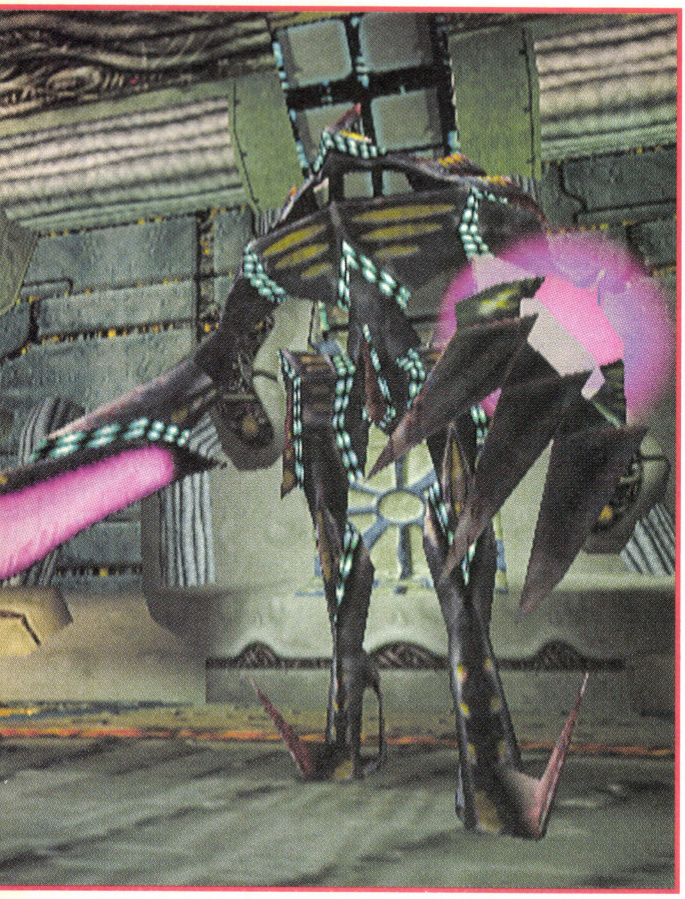
**Final Impact:** As the finest of the three rare shots, the Final Impact has it all: high attack power, pinpoint accuracy and a sneaky EXP-stealing special function.

## Special Guns

**Suppressed Gun:** This unique handgun is for Rangers only, and it outclasses all other pistols in terms of attack, accuracy and visual flair. It looks like something Metal Gear Solid's Solid Snake might wield and can be ground to an amazing +40.

**Holy Ray:** Only the coolest kids have this stylish gun, a wacky handheld laser that shoots a beam of pure light.

**Inferno Bazooka:** Surprisingly, all classes can equip this massive bazooka. However, its lethargic fire rate makes it difficult to use effectively. FOnewearls have a



Sega Genesis days. At first you'll be beset by a number of small, lethal Darvant pods. This part is very difficult. Once you kill several, you can move on to Dark Falz himself.

This huge creature is best attacked with guns — yes, even Hunters will want to have a handgun ready for this battle. Shoot any one of the large heads.

After this form is defeated, he'll shed his appendages and ride around the perimeter on a bulbous sac. This is your target. Don't stand directly in front of him, where he can hit you with the majority of his attacks. He'll slow-mo you, so hopefully your party has a Force who's quick on the trigger with Anti.

When you defeat this rainbow-winged menace on Normal, the game will end. On Hard and V-Hard, you'll have to fight his third form, which is incredibly difficult. When he rises in the air, it's time to run.

While aloft, he will do one of three things. He can shoot blue beams, which are easily avoided if you're already running. He can, alternately, suck on your soul. It hurts a lot, and if the other players don't notice what's happening (watch the radar) their attacks will hurt you.

Grants is a real killer. The key to survival is having Resist/Saint slot items equipped. When he sinks back down, blast him. Be careful of his swords. Unfortunately, when he's shining he's invulnerable unless you're using a Draw weapon. Heal often, revive the other players, and keep a careful eye on your HP above all else. ■

**Delsabers are very formidable enemies. They can jump across entire chambers, and their repeated slashes are very strong.**

special advantage with it, as their shooting animation is quicker than that of other classes.

**Egg Blaster:** Perhaps the most hotly desired gun is this zany contraption, a pistol developed by Sonic's arch nemesis, Doctor Robotnik. This impressive gun can be raised to an astonishing +99!

**Flame Visit:** In one of the Hunter's Guild quests, a companion named Bernie packs one of these blazing rifles. If you're really lucky, you may find one for yourself.

**Spread Needle:** Considered by many to be the most useful weapon in PSO, the Spread Needle is a shot imbued with paralyzing power. Any class can equip this deadly gun, and you'll be considered an EXP hog if you use it online.

## Other Weapons

There are other weapons in PSO that defy classification.

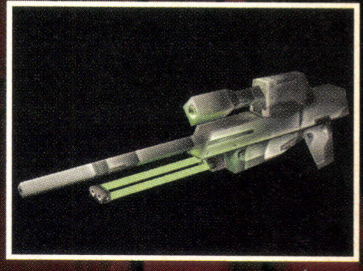
**Brave Knuckle, Angry Fist:** These uncommon implements allow your character to fight hand-to-hand with the usual prowess afforded by a weapon. When in use, it basically looks like standard punching and kicking, but a trail of shimmering sparkles fall from your hands.

**Soul Banish:** Like its quest-derived sibling, Soul Eater, this scythe has a wide range, high attack power and a taste for your HP. Any class can use this macabre sickle.

**Victor Axe:** Nothing smashes quite like an axe, so Hunters with a desire to obliterate their foes should track down one of these elusive weapons.

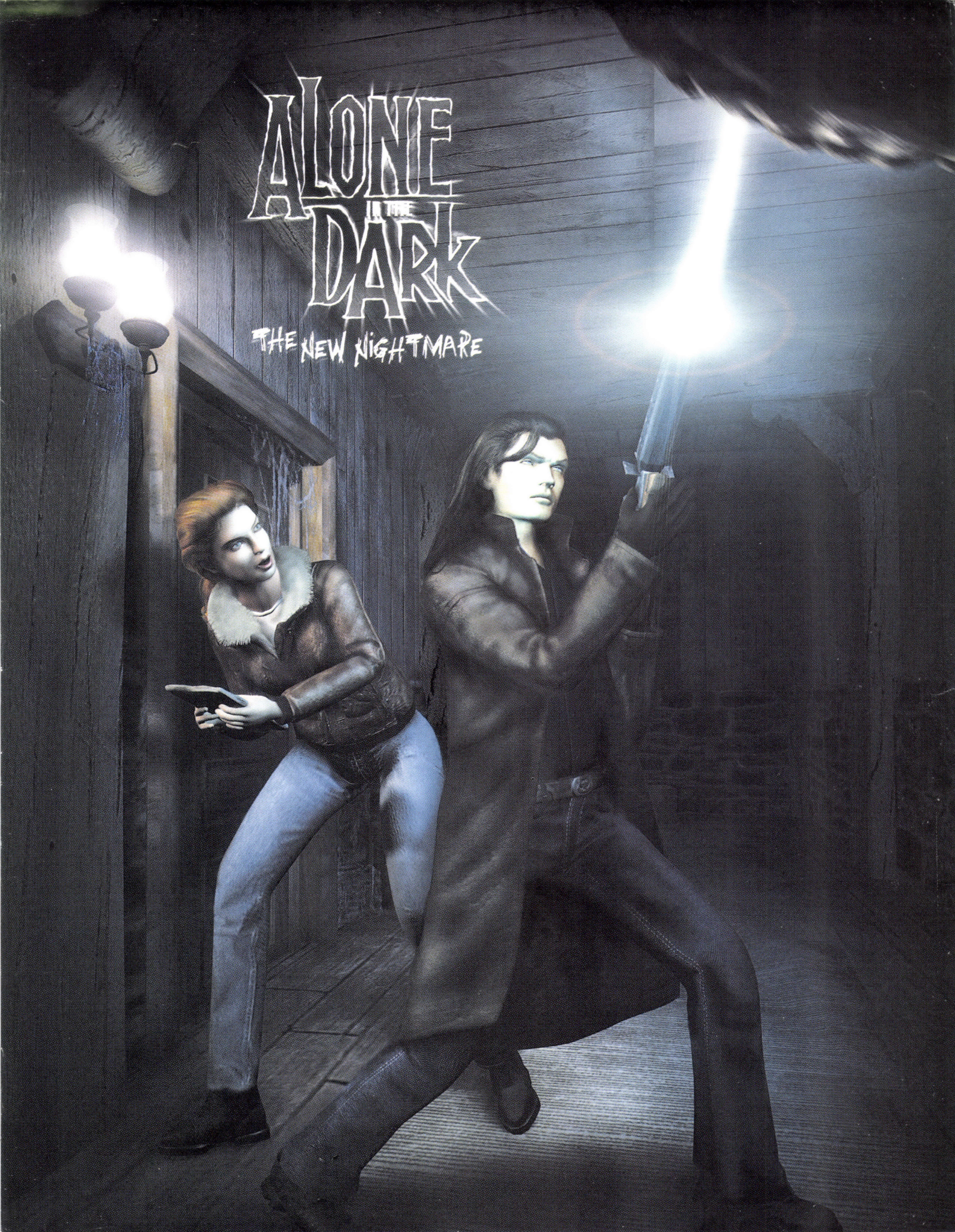
**Photon Claw, Silence Claw, Terror Claw:** These amazing weapons look like nothing else in the game, and recall the claw-wielding characters from Phantasy Stars of old (Myau, Nei, Mieu and Rika). Each one features a different special property, but all claws are fast, powerful and accurate. ■

**Rifles are the long-range weapon of choice.**





# METAL GEAR SOLID 2


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